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THE COLLEGIANS.

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CHAPTER XVI.

HOW THE FRIENDS PARTED.

"Is Fighting Poll up yet, I wonder," said Lowry Looby, as he stood cracking his whip in the farm-yard, while the morning was just beginning to break, and the dairy people were tying down the firkins on his car. "I'd like to see her before I'd go, to know would she have any commands westwards. There's no houl't upon her to hinder her speaking of a Friday, whatever."

"Is who up?" exclaimed a shrill voice which proceeded from the grated windows of the

dairy. It was that of the industrious Mrs. Frawley, who, as early, if not as brisk and sprightly as the lark, was already employed in setting her milk in the keelers.

"Fighting Poll of the Recks," replied Lowry, turning toward the wire grating, through which he beheld the extensive figure of the dairy-woman, as neat as a bride, employed in her health-giving, life-prolonging, avocations.

"Who is she, why?" said Mrs. Frawley.

"Don't you know the girl that come in the boat with Misther Cregan, and *sleep* in the room outside you?"

"Oyeh! I did n't know who you meant. The boatman's handsome little sister?"

"Handsome, ayeh?"

"Yes, then, handsome. She has the dawniest little nose I think I ever laid my two eyes on."

"Why then 'tis a new story with it for a nose. Formerly, when I knew it, it was more

like a button musharoon than any thing else, and the colour of a boiled carrot. Good raison it had for that, as the publicans could tell you."

"Hold your tongue, man. Is it to drink you say she used?"

"A thrifle, I'm tould."

"E' then, I never see one that has less the sign of it than what she has."

"She's altered lately, Danny Mann tells me. Nelly, croo," he added, changing his tone, "*Son-
nuher* * to you, now, an' get me a dram, for its threatening to be a moist foggy mornen', an' I have a long road before me."

Nelly was occupied in liberating a whole regiment of ducks, hens, pouts, chicks, cocks, geese and turkies; who all came quacking, clucking, whistling, chirping, crowing, cackling, and gobbling, through the opened fowl-house door into the yard; where they remained shaking

* A good husband.

their wings on tiptoe, stretching their long necks over the little pool, the surface of which was green, and covered with feathers ; appearing to congratulate each other on their sudden liberation, and seeming evidently disposed to keep all the conversation to themselves.

“What is it you say, Lowry ? Choke ye, for ducks, will ye let nobody spake but ye’rselves ? What is it, Lowry ?”

Lowry repeated his request, making it more intelligible amid the clamour of the farm-yard, by using a significant gesture. He imitated the action of one who fills a glass and drinks it. He then laid his hand upon his heart and shook his head, as if to intimate the comfort that would be produced about that region by performing in reality what he only mocked at present.

Nelly understood him as well as if he had spoken volumes. Commissioned by Mrs. Frawley, she supplied him with a bottle of spirits and a glass, with the use of which, let

us do Lowry the justice to say, there was not a man in the barony better acquainted.

While he dashed from his eyes the tears which were produced by the sharpness of the stimulus, he heard footsteps behind him, and looking round, beheld Danny, the Lord, and the *soi-disant* Mrs. Naughten, still muffled in her blue cloak and hood, and occupying a retired position near the kitchen door.

“ I’ll tell you what it is, Nelly,” said Lowry with a knowing wink to the *soubrette*. “ Poll Naughten lives very convenient on the Cork road, or not far from it, an’ I do be often goen’ that way of a lonesome night. I’ll make a friend o’ Poll before she leaves this, so as that she’ll be glad to see me another time. I’ll go over an’ offer her a dhram. That I may be blest, but I will.”

So saying, and hiding the bottle and glass under the skirt of his coat, he moved toward the formidable heroine of the mountains

with many respectful bows and a smile of the most winning cordiality.

“ A fine, moist mornen’ Mrs. Naughten. I hope you feel no *fatigue* after the night, ma’am. Your sarvant, Misther Mann. I hope you didn’t *feel* us in the yard, ma’am. I sthrove to keep ’em quiet, o’ purpose. Tis’nt goen’ ye are so airly, Misther Mann?”

Danny, who felt all the importance of diverting Lowry Looby’s attention from his fair charge, could find no means so effectual as that of acknowledging the existence of a mystery, and admitting him into a pretended confidence. Advancing, therefore, a few steps to meet him, he put on a most serious countenance and laid his finger warily along his nose.

“ What’s the matther ? ” whispered Lowry, bending down in the eagerness of curiosity.

Danny the Lord repeated the action with the addition of a cautionary frown.

“ Can’t she talk of a Friday either ? ” said Lowry, much amazed. “ I undherstand, Mis-ther Mann. Trust me for the bare life. A nod is as good as a wink to a blind horse.”

“ Or ass eider,” muttered the hunch-back as he turned away.

“ But, Misther Mann ! ” cried Lowry, laying his immense claw upon his Lordship’s shoulder. “ Listen hether. ‘ The mornen ’ will be smart enough, and may be I’d betther offer her a dhram, and she goen’ upon the wather ? ”

He strode past the Lord and was close to the muffled fair one, when Danny pulled him back by the skirt.

“ Did’nt I tell you before,” said he, “ dat Poll never drank ? ”

“ ‘ Iss, of a Thursday you said.”

“ Or a Friday, or any day. Oh den, oh den, Lowry ! ”

“ Well, I meant no harm. May be you’d have no vow yourself on the head of it any way, sir? ” And he displayed the bottle.

“ Dere are tree kinds of oats, Lowry,” responded Danny Mann, as he twined his bony fingers fondly around the neck of the bottle; “ Dere are tree kinds of oats dat are forbidden to be tuk as unlawful. Dey are false oats, rash oats, and unjust oats. Now do you see me, Lowry,” he continued, as he filled his glass—“ if I made a vow o’ dat kind, it would be an unjust oat, for it would be traiten’ myself very bad, a poor boy dat’s night and day at sech cold work as mine, an’ it would be a rash oat, Lowry, for—” [here he tossed off the spirits] “ I’m blest but it would’nt be long before I’d make it a false oat.”

Lowry was greatly shocked at this unprincipled speech. “ That’s a nate youth,” he said privately to Nelly. “ That’s a nice poet, not judging him. If that lad does’nt see the

inside of the Stone Jug * for some bad business one time or another, I'll give you lave to say black is the white o' my eye. If the gallows is n't wrote upon his face, there's no mait in mutton. Well, good mornen' to you, Nelly, I see my load is ready. I have every thing now, I suppose, Mrs. Frawley. Whup, get up here, you old garron! Good mornen' to you, Mrs. Naughten, an' a fair wind after you. Good mornen', Misther Mann." He cracked his whip, tucked the skirt of his riding coat under his arm, as usual, threw his little head back, and followed the car out of the yard, singing in a pleasant contented key:—

“ Don't you remember the time I gave you my heart ?

You solemnly swore from me you never would part.

But your mind's like the ocean,

Each notion

Has now taken flight,

And left me bemoaning the loss of the red-haired man's wife.

Kyrle Daly and his young friend were mean-

The gaol.

while exchanging a farewell upon the little gravel plot before the front door.

“Come, come, go in out of the air,” said Hardress, “you shall not come down to the shore in that slight dress. Remember what I have told you, and sustain your spirits. Before another month shall pass, I pledge myself to become master, for your sake, of Anne Chute’s secret.”

“And to honour it ?” said Kyrle, smiling as he gave him his hand.

“According to its value,” replied Hardress, tossing his head, “Good bye ; I see Danny Mann and his sister coming round, and we must not lose the morning’s tide.”

They shook hands and parted.

It was one of those still and heavy mornings which are peculiar to the close of summer in this climate. The surface of the waters was perfectly still, and a light wreath of mist steamed upward from the centre of the channel, so as to veil from their sight the opposite shores of

Clare. This mist, ere long, became a dense and blinding fog, that lasted until noon, and together with the breathless calm that lay upon the land and water, prevented their reaching Ballybunion until sunset. In one of those caverns which are hollowed out of the cliffs on this shore, the traveller may discern the remains of an artificial chamber. It was used at the period of which we write, as a kind of ware-room for contraband goods ; a species of traffic which was freely engaged in by nearly all the middling gentry and small farmers along the coast. A subterraneous passage, faced with dry stone work, opened into the interior of the country ; and the chamber itself, from constant use, was become perfectly dry and habitable. In this place Hardress proposed to Eily that they should remain, and take some refreshment, while Danny the Lord was dispatched to secure a better lodging for the night, at some retired farm-house in the neighbourhood.

Small canvass-built canoe, summoned from the interior of the cave by a whistle from the Lord, was employed to convey them from the pleasure-boat into the gloomy porch of this natural souterrain. Before the fragile skiff had glided into the darkness, Eily turned her head to catch a parting look of the descending sun. The scene which met her gaze, would have appeared striking, even to an accustomed eye ; and to one like hers, acquainted only with the smoky splendour of a city sunset, it was grand and imposing in the extreme. Before her lay the gigantic portals of the Shannon, through which the mighty river glided forth with a majestic calmness, to mingle with the wide and waveless ocean that spread beyond and around them. On her right arose the clifted shores of Clare, over which the broad ball of day, although some minutes hidden from her sight, seemed yet, by refraction, to hold his golden circlet suspended amid a broken and brilliant mass of vapours.

Eily kept her eyes fixed in admiration on the dilated orb, until a turn in the cave concealed the opening from her view, and she could only see the stream of light behind, as it struck on the jagged and broken walls of the orifice, and danced upon the surface of the agitated waters.

The place to her seemed terrible. The hollow sound of the boatman's voice, the loud splash of the oars, and the rippling of the water against the vessel's prow, reverberating through the vaulted chambers; the impenetrable darkness into which they seemed to plunge headlong, and reckless of danger or impediment; all united, constituted a scene so new to the simple Eily, that she grasped close the arm of her husband, and held her breath for some moments, as if in expectation of some sudden and terrific encounter. In a little time the boatman rested on his oars, and a voice from the interior of the cave was heard exclaiming in Irish, "Is it himself?"

• "It is," said the boatman in the same lan-

guage. "Light up the fire at once, and put down a few of the fresh herrings. The lady is hungry."

"You will join for the first time, Eily," said Hardress, "in a fisherman's supper. Well, Larry, had you much luck last night?"

"Poor enough, masther," said the same oracular voice, which Eily now recognized as that of the man to whose escort she had been entrusted by Lowry Looby on the previous evening. "We left Misther Daly's point as soon as ever the wind fell, and come down as far as Kilcordane, thinking we might come across the skull; but, though we were out all night, we took only five hundhert, more or less. A' why do'nt you light up the fire, Phaudhrig! And 'twasnt ~~that~~ that the herrings did'nt come into the river either, for when the moon shone out ~~we~~ saw the scull to the westward, making a curl on the waters, as close an' thick as if you threw a shovel full o' gravel in a pond."

The fire now blazed suddenly upward, revealing the interior of the apartment before alluded to, and the figure of the rough old boatman and his boy. The latter was stooping forward on his hands, and kindling the fire with his breath, while Larry Kett himself was rinsing a small metal pot at the water-side. The effect of the smoky and subterraneous light upon those uncouth and grisly figures, and on the rude excavation itself, impressed the timid Eily with a new and agitating sensation, too nearly allied to fear to leave her mind at ease.

In a few minutes she was seated on a small keg near the fire, while Hardress hurried the men who were preparing dinner. Larry Kett was not so proficient in the science of gastronomy as the celebrated Louis of Crockford's, and yet it is to be questioned, whether the culinary preparations of the latter were ever dispatched with more eagerness and satisfaction. Eily, indeed, ate only a heroine's proportion; but she

wondered at the voracity of the boatmen, one of whom placing a raw onion on an unpeeled potatoe, swallow'd both at a mouthful, almost without employing a single masticatory action.

Danny Mann in the meantime was occupied in procuring a more eligible lodging for the night. He returned when they had concluded their unceremonious meal, to say that he had been successful in procuring two rooms, in the house of "a little 'oman dat kep a private bottle between dat an' Beale."

"A private bottle?" exclaimed Hardress;
"what do you mean by a private bottle?"

"I mean," replied the little lord, "dat she sells as good a drop as if she paid license for it; a ting she never was fool enough to do."

"Where^o does she live?"

"Close to de road above. She told me,"
[here he drew Hardress aside] "when I axed her, dat Myles of de ponies, and de master, an' a deal o' gentlemen went de road westwards yester-

day, an' dat Phil Naughten, (Poll's Phil) was in Beale waiten' for you dese two days wit de horse an' jauntin' car."

"I am glad to hear it. Step over there to-night, and tell him to be at the door before day-break to-morrow morning. Tell him I will double his fare if he uses diligence."

"Why din, indeed," said Danny, "I'll tell him notin' o' de sort. 'Twould be de same case wit him still, for he's a boy dat if you gave him England, Ireland, an' Scotland for an estate, he'd ax de Isle o' Man for a kitchen garden."

"Well, well, do as you please about it, Danny, but have him on the spot. That fellow," he continued, speaking to Eily as he conducted her out of the cavern, "that fellow is so impudent sometimes, that nothing but the recollection of his fidelity and the honesty of his motive keeps my hand at rest. He is my

foster brother, and, you may perceive, with the exception of one deformity, a well looking man."

"I never observed any thing but the hunch," said Eily.

"For which," added Hardress with a slight change in his countenance, "he has to thank his master."

"You, Mr. Hardress!"

"Even so, Eily. When we were both children, that young fellow was my constant companion. Familiarity produced a feeling of equality, on which he presumed so far as to offer a rudeness to a little relative of mine, a Miss Chute, who was on a visit at my mother's. She complained to me, and my vengeance was summary. I met him at the head of the kitchen stairs, and without even the ceremony of a single question or preparatory speech, I seized him by the collar and hurled him with desperate force to the bottom of the flight. He was unable to

rise as soon as I expected, and on examination it was discovered that an injury had been done to the spine, which, notwithstanding all the exertions that were employed to repair it, had its result in his present deformity."

"It was shocking," said Eily, with much simplicity of feeling. "No wonder you should be kind to him."

"If I were a mere block," said Hardress, "I could not but be affected by the goodnature and kindly feeling which the poor fellow showed on the occasion, and indeed down to the present moment. It seemed to be the sole aim and study of his life to satisfy me that he entertained not even a sentiment of regret for what had happened; and his attachment ever since has been the attachment of a zealot. I know he cannot but feel that his own prospects in life have been made dark and lonely by that accident; and yet he is congratulating himself whenever an opportunity occurs, on his good fortune, in being provided

with a constant service, as if (poor fellow!) that were any compensation to him. I have been alarmed to observe that he sometimes attaches even a profane importance to his master's wishes, and seems to care but little what laws he may transgress when his object is the gratification of my inclinations. I say, I am alarmed on this subject, because I have taken frequent occasion to remark that this injury to his spine has in some degree affected his head, and left him less able to discern the impropriety of such a line of conduct than people of sounder minds."

CHAPTER XVII.

HOW HARDRESS LEARNED A LITTLE SECRET FROM A DYING HUNTSMAN.

NOTWITHSTANDING the message which Hardress Cregan sent by Lowry Looby, it was more than a week before he visited his parents at their Killarney residence. Several days were occupied in seeing Eily pleasantly settled in her wild cottage in the Gap, and a still greater number in enjoying with her the pleasures of an autumnal sojourn amid those scenes of mystery, enchantment and romance. To a mind that is perfectly at freedom, Killarney

forms in itself a congeries of Elysian raptures ; but to a fond bride and bridegroom !——the heaven, to which its mountains rear their naked heads in awful reverence, alone can furnish a superior happiness.

After taking an affectionate leave of his beautiful wife, and assuring her that his absence should not be extended beyond the following day, Hardress Cregan mounted one of Phil Naughten's rough-coated ponies, and set off for Dinis Cottage. It was not situated (as its name might seem to import) on the sweet little island which is so called, but far apart, near the ruined Church of Aghadoe, commanding a distant view of the lower lake and the lofty and wooded Toonies.

The sun had gone down before he left the wild and rocky glen in which was situated the cottage of his bride. It was, as we have already apprized the reader, the first time Hardress had visited the Lakes since his return

from College, and the scenery, now, to his matured and well-regulated taste, had not only the effect of novelty, but it was likewise invested with the hallowing and romantic charm of youthful association. The stillness, so characteristic of majesty, which reigned throughout the gigantic labyrinth of mountain, cliff, and valley through which he rode ; the parting gleam of sunshine that brightened the ever-moving mists on the summit of the lofty peaks by which he was surrounded ; the solitary appearance of the many nameless lakes that slept in black repose in the centre of the mighty chasm ; the echo of his horse's hoofs against the stony road ; the voice of a goatherd's boy, as he drove homeward, from the summit of a heath-clad mountain, his troublesome and adventurous charge ; the lonely twitter of the kirkeen dhra, or little water hen, as it flew from rock to rock on the margin of the broken stream—these, and other long for-

gotten sights and sounds, awakened at the same instant the consciousness of present, and the memory of past enjoyments; and gradually lifted his thoughts to that condition of calm enthusiasm and fulness of soul which constitutes one of the highest pleasures of a meditative mind. He did not fail to recal at this moment the memory of his childish attachment, and could not avoid a feeling of regret at the unpleasing change that education had produced in the character of his first, though not his dearest love.

This feeling became still more deep and oppressive as he approached the cottage of his father. Every object that he beheld, the lawn, the grove, the stream, the hedge, the stile—all brought to mind some sweet remembrance of his boyhood. The childish form of Anne Chute still seemed to meet him with her bright and careless smile, at every turn in the path; or to fly before him over the shorn meadow, as of old; while the wild and merry peal of infant laughter, seemed

still to ring upon his hearing. "Dear little being!" he exclaimed, as he rode into the cottage avenue. "The burning springs of Gluver, I thought, might sooner have been frozen, than the current of that once warm and kindly heart; but like those burning springs, it is only in the season of coldness and neglect that fountain can resume its native warmth. It is the fervour of universal homage and adulation that strikes it cold and pulseless in its channels."

The window of the dining parlour alone was lighted up, and Hardress was informed in answer to his inquiries, that the ladies, Mrs. Cregan and Miss Chute, were gone to a grand ball in the neighbourhood. Mr. Cregan, with two other gentlemen, was drinking in the dining-room; and, as he might gather from the tumultuous nature of the conversation, and the occasional shouts of ecstatic enjoyment, and bursts of laughter which rang through the house, already pretty far advanced in the bacchanian ceremonies

of the night. The voices he recognized, besides his father's, were those of Hepton Connolly, and Mr. Creagh, the duellist.

Feeling no inclination to join the revellers, Hardress ordered candles in the drawing room, and prepared to spend a quiet evening by himself. He had scarcely however taken his seat on the st-backed sofa, when his retirement was aided by old Nancy, the kitchen-maid, who came to tell him that poor Dalton the huntsman was "a'most off," in the little green room, and that when he heard Mr. Hardress had arrived, he begged of all things to see him before he'd go. "He never was himself rightly; a 'ra gal," said old Nancy, wiping a tear from the corner of her eye, "since the mather sold the hounds and tuk to the cock-fighting."

Hardress started up and followed her. "Poor fellow!" he exclaimed as he went along, "Poor Dalton! And is that breath that wound so many merry blasts upon the mountain, so soon to be

extinguished?—I remember the time, when I thought a monarch upon his throne a less enviable being than our stout huntsman, seated on his keen eyed steed, in his scarlet frock and cap, with his hounds, like painted courtiers, thronging and baying round his horse's hoofs, and his horn hanging silent at his waist! Poor fellow! Every beagle in the pack was his familiar acquaintance, and was as jealous of his chirp or his whistle, as my cousin Anne's admirers might be of a smile or secret whisper! How often has he carried me before him on his saddle bow, and taught me the true fox-hunting cry! How often at evening has he held me between his knees, and excited my young ambition with tales of hunts hard run, and neck or nothing leaps; of double ditches, cleared by an almost miraculous dexterity; of drawing, yearning, challenging, hunting mute, hunting change, and hunting counter! And now the poor fellow must wind his last recheat, and carry

his own old bones to earth at length!—never again to waken the echoes of the mountain lakes—never again beneath the shadow of those immemorial woods that clothe their lofty shores --

“ *Ære ciere viros, Martemque accendere cantu!* ”

The fox may come from kennel, and the red-deer slumber on his layer, for their mighty enemy is now himself at bay.”

While these reflections passed through the mind of Hardress, old Nancy conducted him as far as the door of the huntsman’s room, where he paused for a moment on hearing the voice of one singing inside. It was that of the worn-out huntsman himself, who was humming over a few verses of a favorite ballad. The lines which caught the ear of Hardress were the following:—

“ Ah, huntsman dear, I'll be your friend,
If you let me go till morning;
Don't call your hounds for one half hour,
Nor neither sound your horn;
For indeed I'm tired from yesterday's hunt,
I can neither run nor walk well,
'Till I go to Rock hill amongst my friends,
Where I was bred and born.
Tally ho the fox!
Tally ho the fox!
Tally ho the fox, a collauncen,
Tally ho the fox
Over hills and rocks
And chase him on till morning.”

“ He cannot be so very ill,” said Hardress, looking at the old woman, “ when his spirits will permit him to sing so merrily.”

“ Oyeh, heaven help you, a gra ! ” replied Nancy, “ I believe if he was at death's doore this moment, he'd have that song on his tongue still.”

“ Hush ! hush ! ” said Hardress, raising his hand, “ he is beginning again.”

The ballad was taken up, after a heavy fit of coughing, in the same strain.

‘ I locked him up an’ I fed him well,
 An’ I gave him victuals of all kinds;
 But I declare to you, sir, when he got loose,
 He ate a fat goose in the morning.
 So now kneel down an’ say your prayers,
 For you’ll surely die this morning.
 ‘ Ah, sir ’ says the fox, I never pray,
 ‘ For my Father he bred me a quaker.’
 Tally ho the fox !
 Tally ho the —————

Hardress here opened the door and cut short the *refrain*.

The huntsman turned his face to the door as he heard the handle turn. It was that of a middle aged man in the very last stage of pulmonary consumption. A red night-cap was pushed back from his wasted and sunken temples, and a flush like the bloom of a withered pippin played in the hollow of his fleshless cheek.

“ Cead millia fealtha ! My heart warms to see you, my own master Hardress,” exclaimed the huntsman, reaching him a skeleton hand from

beneath the brown quilt, "I can die in pace now, as I see you again in health. These ten days back they're telling me your're coming, an' coming, an' coming, until I began to think at last that you wouldn't come until I was gone."

"I am sorry to see you in this condition," Dalton——How did you get the attack

"Out of a cold I think I got it first sir. When the masther sold the hounds—(Ah, masther Hardhress! to think of his parting them dogs and giving up that fine, manly exercise, for a paltry parcel o' cocks an' hens!) but when he sold them an' took to the cock-fighting, my heart felt as low an' as lonesome as if I lost all belonging to me! To please the masther, I turned my hand to the cocks, an' used to go every morning to the hounds' kennel, where the birds were kept, to give 'em food an' water; but I could *never warm* to the birds. Ah, what is a cock-fight, Masther Hardhress, in comparison of a well-

rode hunt among the mountains, with your horse flying under you like a fairy, and the cry o' the hounds like an organ out before you, and the ground fleeting like a dream on all sides o' you, an', ah! what's the use o' talking?" Here he lay back on his pillow with a look of sudden pain and sorrow that cut Hardress to the heart.

After a few moments, he again turned a ghastly eye on Hardress, and said in a faint voice, "I used to go down by the lake in the evening to hear the stags belling in the wood; and in the morning I'd be up with the first light, to blow a call on the top o' the hill as I used to do, to comfort the dogs; and then I'd miss their cry, an' I'd stop listenin' to the aychoes o' the horn among the mountains, till my heart would sink as low as my ould boots. And bad boots they wor too, signs on, I got wet in 'em; and themselves, and the could morning air, and the want o' the horse exercise, I believe, an'

every thing, brought on this fit. Is the mistress at home, sir ? ” he added, after struggling through a severe fit of oppression.

“ No, she is at a ball, with Miss Chute ”

“ Good tool to them both, wherever they are. That’s the way o’ the world. Some in health, an’ some in sickness, some dancin’, and more dyin’.”

Here he raised himself on his elbow, and after casting a haggard glance around, as if to be assured that what he had to say could not be overheard, he leaned forward toward Hardress, and whispered “ I know one in this house, master Hardress, that loves you well.”

The young gentleman looked a little surprised.

“ Indeed I do,” continued the dying huntsman, “ one too that deserves a better fortune than to love any one without a return. One that was kind to me in my sickness, and that I’d like to see happy before I’d leave the world, if it was Heaven’s will.”

During this conversation, both speakers had been frequently rendered inaudible by occasional bursts of laughter and shouts of Bacchanalian mirth from the dining-room. At this moment, and before the young gentleman could select any mode of inquiry into the particulars of the singular communication above mentioned, the door was opened, and the face of old Nancy appeared, bearing on its smoked-dried features a mingled expression of perplexity and sorrow.

“ Dalton, a’ ragal ! ” she exclaimed, “ don’t blame me for what I’m going to say to you, for it is my tongue, an’ not my wish or my heart, that speaks it. The masther and the gentlemen sent me into you, an’ bid me tell you, for the sake of old times, to give them one fox huntin’ screech before you go.”

The old huntsman fixed his brilliant but sickly eyes on the messenger, while a flush that might have been the indication of anger or of

grief, flickered like a decaying light upon his brow. At length he said, "And did the master send that message by you, Nancy?"

"He did, Dalton, indeed. Ayeh, the gentlemen must be excused."

"True for you, Nancy," said the huntsman after a long pause. Then raising his head with a smile of seeming pleasure, he continued. "Why then, I'm glad to see the master has'nt forgot the dogs entirely. Go to him, Nancy, and tell him that I'm glad to hear that he has so much o' the sport left in him still. And that it is kind father for him to have a feeling for his huntsman, an' I thank him. Tell him, Nancy, to send me in one good glass o' Parliament punch, an' I'll give him such a cry as he never heard in a cock-pit any way."

The punch was brought, and in spite of the remonstrances of Hardress, drained to the bottom. The old huntsman then sat erect in the

bed, and letting his head back, indulged in one prolonged “hoicks!” that made the phials jingle on the table, and frightened the sparrows from their roosts beneath the thatch. It was echoed by the jolly company in the dining parlour, chorussed by a howling from all the dogs in the yard, and answered by a general clamour from the fowl-house. “Another! Another! Hoicks!” resounded through the house. But the poor consumptive was not in a condition to gratify the revellers. When Hardress looked down upon him next, the pillow appeared dark with blood, and the cheek of the sufferer had lost even the unhealthy bloom, that had so long masked the miner Death, in his work of snug destruction. A singular brilliancy fixed itself upon his eye-balls, his lips were dragged backward, blue and cold, and with an expression of dull and general pain;—his teeth——, but wherefore linger on such a picture?—it is better let the curtain fall.

Hardress Cregan felt less indignation at this circumstance than he might have done if it had occurred at the present day ; but yet he *was* indignant. He entered the dining parlour to remonstrate, with a frame that trembled with passion.

“ And pray, Hardress ? ” said Hepton Connolly, as he emptied the ladle into his glass and turned on him an eye whose steadiness, to say the least, was equivocal. “ Pray now, Hardress, is poor Dalton really dead ? ”

“ He is, sir. I have already said it.”

“ No offence my boy. I only asked, because if he be, it is a sure sign, [here he sipped his punch and winked at Cregan with the confident air of one who is about to say a *right good thing*,] it is a sign that he never will die again.”

There was a loud laugh at Hardress, which confused him as much as if he had been discomfited by a far superior wit. So true it is, that the influence, and not the capacity, of an oppo-

ment, renders him chiefly formidable ; and that, at least, a fair half of the sum of human motive may be placed to the account of vanity.

Hardress could think of nothing that was very witty to say in reply, and as the occasion hardly warranted a slap on the face, his proud spirit was compelled to remain passive. Unwilling however to leave the company, while the laugh continued against him, he called for a glass and sat down amongst them.

CHAPTER XVIII.

HOW THE GENTLEMEN SPENT THE EVENING,
WHICH PROVED RATHER WARMER THAN
HARDRESS EXPECTED.

“PEACE!” said Hepton Connolly, with a face of drunken seriousness, “peace be to the manes of poor Dalton!”

“Amen, with all my heart!” exclaimed Mr. Cregan, “although the cocks are well rid of him. But a better horseman never backed a hunter.”

“I drink him,” said Hyland Creagh, “although I seldom care to toast a man who dies in his bed.”

“That’s all trash and braggery, Creagh,” cried Connolly—“we’ll have you yet upon the flat of your back, and roaring for a priest into the bargain.”

“Upon my honour as a gentleman, I am serious,” said Creagh. “They may talk of the field of battle and bloody breaches, forlorn hopes, and hollow squares, and such stuff; but what is the glory of a soldier after all! To drag through the fatigues of a whole campaign, with its concomitants of night-watches, marches in marshes, and bivouacs in rainy weather, and with no brighter prospect at the year’s end, than that of making one among half a million of fighting fellows who are shot on a heap like larks. And, even then, you meet not hand to hand, but cloud to cloud, moving about in a flock, and waiting your turn to take your allowance of cold lead, and fill a pit with your neighbours. Glory? What glory is there in figuring in small types among a list of killed

and wounded? the utmost distinction that a poor sub. can ever hope for. Why, a coward is no more ball proof than a gallant fellow, and both may often shine together upon the same list. No—my ambition should have a higher aim. While I live, let my life be that of a fearless fellow; and when I die, let my epitaph be found in a handsome paragraph, under the head of ‘Domestic Intelligence,’ in the county journal. “*Affair of honour.* Yesterday morning at five o’clock—meeting took place—Hyland Creagh, Esquire—attended by Blank Esquire—and Captain Blank attended by—Blank Esquire—regret to state—Mr. Creagh—third fire—mortally wounded—borne from the ground.—The affair, we understand, originated in a dispute respecting a lovely and accomplished young lady, celebrated as a reigning toast in that quarter.”

“And grand-niece, we understand,” added Hardress, laughing “to the unhappy old gentleman, whose fate we have just recorded.”

There was a laugh at Creagh.

"Nay, my young friend," he said, adjusting his ruffles with the air of a Chesterfield—"the journal that shall mention *that* circumstance must be dated many years hence."

"Adad, not so far off neither, Creagh," exclaimed Mr. Cregan, "and if you were to go out to-morrow morning, I should not like to see you go posting to the devil upon such a mission as that."

"Talking of the devil," said Hepton Connolly, "did you hear, Creagh, that the priest is to have us all upon the altar next Sunday, on account of that little squib we had in the mountains the day of the races?"

"It may be," said Creagh, with a supercilious smile; "*mais ce n'est pas mon affaire*. I have not the honour to belong to his communion."

"Oh," cried Mr. Cregan, "true enough. You belong to the genteel religion."

“There you have the whip hand of me,” said Connolly, “for I am a papist. Well, Creagh, not meaning to impugn your gallantry now, I say this ; a papist, to fight a duel, requires and possesses the courage of a protestant ten times over.”

“Pray will you oblige me with a reason for that pleasant speech ? ”

“’Tis as clear as this glass. A protestant is allowed a wide discretionary range on most ethical, as well as theological points of opinion. A poor papist has none. The Council of Trent in its twenty-fifth session (I have it from the Bishop) excommunicates all duellists, and calls the practice an invention of the devil. And what can I say against it ? I know something of the common law, and the rights of things, persons and so forth, but the canonical code to me is a fountain sealed. ’Tis something deeper than a cause before the petty sessions. ’Tis easier to come at Blackstone, or even Coke upon

Lyttleton himself, than at Manochius, or Saint Augustine."

"Well, but how you run on! You were talking about the courage of a protestant and catholic."

"I say a papist must be the braver man; for in addition to his chance of being shot through the brains on a frosty morning in this world, (a cool prospect) it is no joke to be damned everlastingly in the next."

"That never struck me before," exclaimed Cregan.

"And if it had," said Creagh, "I confess I do not see what great disadvantage the reflection could have produced to our friend Connolly; for he knew, that whether he was to be shot yesterday in a duel, or physicked out of the world twenty years hence, that little matter of the other life will be arranged in precisely the same manner."

"As much as to say," replied Connolly,

“that now or then, the devil is sure of his bargain.”

“My idea precisely; but infinitely better expressed.”

“Very good, Creagh. I suppose it was out of a filial affection for the sooty old gentleman you took so much pains to send me to him the other morning.”

“You placed your honour in my hands, and I would have seen you saved fore and aft, fifty times, rather than let the pledge be tarnished. If you did go to the devil, it was my business to see that you met him with clean hands.”

“I feel indebted to you, Creagh.”

“I have seen a dozen shots exchanged on a lighter quarrel. I was present myself at the duel between Hickman and Leake, on a somewhat similar dispute. They fired fourteen shots each, and when their ammunition was exhausted, actually remained on the ground until the seconds could fetch a new supply from the nearest market-town.”

“ And what use did they make of it when it came ? ”

“ Give me time, and you shall hear. ’Twas Hickman’s fire, and he put his lead an inch from Leake’s right hip ; (as pretty a shot as I saw in my life), Leake was not killed, and he stood to his ground like a man. I never will forget the ghastly look he gave me, (I was his second), when he asked whether the laws of the duello would allow a wounded man a chair. I was confident they did, so long as he kept his feet upon the sod, and I said so. Well, the chair was brought. He took his seat somewhat in this manner, grasping the orifice of the wound closely with his disengaged hand. [Here the speaker moved his chair some feet from the table, in order to enact the scene with greater freedom]. There was a fatal steadiness in every motion. I saw Hickman’s eye wink, and not without a cause. It winked again, and never opened after. The

roof of his skull was literally blown away."

"And the other fellow?" said Hardress.

"The other gentleman fell from his chair, a corpse, at the same moment; after uttering a sentiment of savage satisfaction, too horrible, too blasphemous, to think of, much less to repeat."

"They were a murderous pair of ruffians," said Hardress, "and ought to have been impaled upon a cross-road."

"One of them," observed Hyland Creagh, sipping his punch, "one of them was a cousin of mine."

"Oh, and therefore utterly blameless, of course," said Hardress with an ironical laugh.

"I don't know," said Creagh; "I confess I think it a hard word to apply to a gentleman who is unfortunate enough to die in defence of his honour."

"Honour!" exclaimed Hardress, with a

dignant zeal, (for though he was no great devotee, he had yet some gleams of a half religious virtue shining through his character;) "Call you that honour? I say a duellist is a murderer, and worthy of the gallows, and I will prove it. The question lies in the justice or injustice of the mode of reparation. That cannot be a just one which subjects the aggressor and aggrieved to precisely the same punishment. If the duellist be the injured party, he is a suicide; and if he be the inflictor of the wrong, he is a murderer."

"Ay, Hardress," said his father, "but there are cases—"

"Oh, I know what you mean, sir. Fine, delicate, thin-spun modes of insult, that draw on heavier assaults, and leave both parties labouring under the sense of injury. But they are murderers still. If I filled a seat in the legislature, do you think I would give my voice in favour of a law that made it a capital offence to call a man

a scoundrel in the streets ? And shall I dare to inflict with my own hand, a punishment that I would shudder to see committed to the hangman ? ”

“ But if public war be justifiable,” said Connolly, “ why should not private ? ”*

“ Aye,” exclaimed Hardress, “ I see you have got that aphorism of Johnson’s, the fat moralist, to support you ; but I say, shame upon the recreant, for as mean and guilty a compliance with the prejudices of the world as ever parasite betrayed. I stigmatize it as a wilful sin, for how can I esteem the author of *Rasselas* a fool ? ”

“ Very hardly,” said Creagh, “ and pray what is your counter argument ? ”

“ This. Public war is never (when justifi-

* I am sorry the Author of *Guy Mannering* should have thought proper to adopt the same mode of reasoning. Will posterity remove that bar sinister from his literary escutcheon ?

fiable) & quarrel for sounds and conventual notions of honour. Public war is at best a social evil, and cannot be embraced without the full concurrence of society, expressed by its constituted authorities, and obtained only in obedience to the necessity of the case. But to private war, society has given no formal sanction, nor does it derive any advantage from the practice."

"Upon my word," said Creagh, "you have some very curious ideas."

"Well, Hardress," exclaimed Connolly, "if you have a mind to carry those notions into practice, I should recommend you to try it in some other country besides Ireland; you will never go through with it in this."

"In every company and on every soil," said Hardress, "I will avow my sentiments. I never will fight a duel; and I will proclaim my purpose in the ears of all the duellists on earth."

"But society, young gentleman—"

"I bid society defiance; at least that reckless,

godless, heartless crew, to whom you wrongfully apply the term. The greater portion of those who bow down before this bloody error, is composed of slaves and cowards, who are afraid to make their own conviction the guide of their conduct.

‘ Letting *I dare not*, wait upon *I would*.

Like the poor cat in the adage.’

“I am sure,” said Creagh, “I had rather shoot a man for doubting my word than for taking my purse.”

“Because you are as proud as Lucifer,” exclaimed Hardress.—“Who but the great father of all injustice would say that he deserved to be shot for calling *you* a—(it is an unpleasant word to be sure)—a liar?”

“But he does more. He actually *does* strike at my life and property, for I lose both friends and fair repute, if I suffer such an insult to pass unnoticed.”

In answer to this plea, Hardress made a

speech, of which (as the newspapers say,) we regret that our space does not allow us to offer more than a mere outline. He contended that no consequences could justify a man in sacrificing his own persuasion of what was right to the error of his friends. The more general this error was, the more criminal it became to increase the number of its victims. The question was not whether society would disown or receive the passive gentleman, but whether society was in the wrong or in the right; and if the former, then he was bound to adopt the cause of justice at every hazard. He drew the usual distinction between moral and animal courage, and painted with force and feeling the heroism of a brave man encountering alone the torrent of general opinion, and taking more wounds upon his spirit than ever Horatius Coccles risked upon his person. He quoted the celebrated passage of the faithful seraph in Milton, alluded to the Athenian manners, and

told the well-known story of Lucian Anacharsis, all which tended considerably more to exhaust the patience than to convince the understanding of his hearers.

“ Finally,” said he, “ I denounce the system of private war, because it is the offspring of a barbarous pride. It was a barbarousst pride that first suggested the expedient, and it is an intolerable pride that still sustains it. Talk of public war! The world could not exist if nation were to take up the sword against nation upon a point of honour, such as will call out for blood between man and man. The very word means pride. It is a measureless, bloody pride, that demands a reparation so excessive for every slight offence. Take any single quarrel of them all, and dissect its motive, and you will find every portion of it stained with pride, the child of selfishness—pride, the sin of the first devil—pride, the poor pitiful creature of folly and ignorance—pride; the ——”

"Oh, trash and stuff, man," exclaimed Connolly, losing patience, "if you are going to preach a sermon choose another time for it. Come, Creagh, send the bowl this way, and let us drink. Here, young gentleman, stop spouting, and give us a toast. You'll make a fool of yourself, Hardress, if you talk in that manner among gentlemen."

Without making any answer to this speech (which however he felt a little difficulty in digesting) Hardress proposed the health and future fame of young Kyrle Daly.

"With all my heart!" exclaimed both his father and Connolly.

"I'll not drink it," said Creagh, putting in his glass.

Hardress was just as proud (to borrow his own simile) as Lucifer himself; and probably it was on this account he held the quality so cheap. It must be admitted, likewise, that his ~~extraneous type~~ of singularity formed but too

considerable a part of his motive in the line of argument which he had followed up; and he was by no means prepared to perform the heroic part which he had described with so much enthusiasm. Least of all could he be expected to do so at the present moment; for while he was speaking, he had also been drinking, and the warmth of dispute, encreased by the excitement of strong drink, left his reason still less at freedom than it might have been under the dominion of an ordinary passion. He insisted upon Creagh's drinking his toast.

"I shall not drink it," said Creagh; "I consider him as an impertinent puppy."

"He is my friend," said Hardress.

"Oh, then, of course," said Fireball, with an ironical smile, (evidently intended as a retort,) "he is utterly blameless."

To use a vulgar but forcible expression, the blood of Hardress was now completely up. He set his teeth for a moment, and then discharged

the contents of his own glass at the face of the offender. The fire-eater, who, from long experience, was able to anticipate this proceeding, evaded by a rapid motion the degrading missile ; and then quietly resuming his seat, "Be prepared, sir," he said, "to answer this in the morning."

"I am ready now," exclaimed Hardress. "Connolly, lend me your sword, and be my friend. Father, do you second that gentleman, and you will oblige me."

Mr. Barnaby Cregan rose to interfere, but in doing so, he betrayed a secret which had till that moment lain with himself ; he was the first who fell.

"No, no swords," said Connolly, "there are a pretty pair of pistols over the chimney-piece. Let them decide the quarrel."

It was so agreed. Hardress and Creagh took their places in the two corners of the room, upon the understanding, that both were to ap-

proach step by step, and fire when they pleased. Hepton Connolly took his place out of harm's way in a distant corner, while Cregan crept along the floor, muttering in an indistinct tone. "Drunk? aye, but not dead drunk. I call no man dead drunk while he lies on the high road, with sense enough to roll out of the way when a carriage is driving towards him."

Hardress fired, after having made two paces. Creagh, who was unhurt, reserved his shot until he put the pistol up to the head of his opponent. Hardress never flinched, although he really believed that Creagh was about to shoot him.

"Come," said he loudly, "fire your shot and have done with it. I would have met you at the end of a handkerchief upon my friend's quarrel."

Hyland Creagh, after enjoying for a moment the advantage he possessed, uncocked his pistol and laid it on the table.

"Hardress," said he, "you are a brave fellow. I believe I was wrong. I ask your pardon, and am ready to drink your toast."

"Oh, well," said Hardress, with a laugh; "if that be the case, I cannot, of course, think of pursuing the affair any farther." And he reached his hand to his opponent with the air of one who was exercising, rather than receiving, a kindness.

The company once more resumed their places at the table, somewhat sobered by this incident, which though not unusual at the period, was yet calculated to excite a little serious feeling. It was not long, however, before they made amends for what was lost in the way of intoxication. The immense blunderbuss, which stood inside the fender, was replenished to the brim, and the bowl flew round more rapidly than ever. Creagh told stories of the Helms Club in the sweating and pinking days. Connolly overflowed with anecdotes of attorney's outdone,

of plates well won, of bailiffs maimed and beaten; and Cregan (whose tongue was the last member of his frame that became accessory to the sin of intoxication) filled up his share in the conversation, with accounts of cocks, and of ghosts, in the appearance of which last, he was a firm, though not a fearful believer. Hardress remained with the company until the sound of a vehicle, drawing up at the hall door, announced the return of his mother and cousin. He then left the room and hurried to his own apartment, in order to avoid meeting them under circumstances which he well supposed were not calculated to create a good impression in his own favour.

We cannot better illustrate the habits of the period, than by transcribing an observation made in Mr. Cregan's kitchen at the moment of the dispute above detailed. Old Nancy was preparing the mould candles for poor Dalton's wake, when she heard the shot fired in the dining parlour.

“Run into the gentlemen, Mike, eroo,” she exclaimed, without even laying aside the candle, which she was paring with a knife, in order to make it fit the socket more exactly. “I lay my life the gentlemen are fighting a *jewel*.”

“It can’t be a *jewel*,” said Mike the servant boy, who was courting slumber in a low chair before the blazing fire. “It can’t be a *jewel*, when there was only one shot.”

“But it is’nt long from ’em, I’ll be bail, till they’ll fire another if they do’nt be hindered ; for ’tis shot for shot with ’em. Run in, eroo.”

The servant stretched his limbs out lazily, and rubbed his eyes. “Well,” said he, “fair play all the world over. If one fired, you would’nt have the other put up with it, without havin’ his fair revinge ? ”

“But may be one of ’em is kilt already !” observed Nancy.

“E’then, d’ye hear this ? Sure you know,

well, that if there was any body shot, the master would ring the bell ! ”

This observation was conclusive. Old Nancy proceeded with her gloomy toil in silence, and the persuasive Mike, letting his head hang back from his shoulders, and crossing his hands upon his lap, slept soundly on, undisturbed by any idle conjectures on the cause of the noise which they had heard.

CHAPTER XIX.

HOW HARDRESS MET AN OLD FRIEND AND MADE A NEW ONE.

FANCY restored the dreaming Hardress to the society of his beloved Eily. He sat by her side once more, quieting with the caresses of a boyish fondness, her still recurring anxieties, and comforting her apprehensions by endeavouring to make her share his own steady anticipation of his mother's favour and forgiveness. This hope, on his own part, it must be acknowledged, was much stronger in his sleeping than his waking moments; for it was extraordinary

how different his feeling on that subject became after he had reached his home, and when the moment of disclosure drew near. His extreme youth, all ruined as he was by over-indulgence, made him regard his mother with a degree of reverence that approached to fear; and as he seldom loved to submit when once aroused to contest, so he was usually careful to avoid as much as possible, any occasion for the exercise of his hereditary perseverance. The influence of his parent, however, consisted not so much in her parental authority, as in the mastery which she held over his filial affections, which partook of the intensity that distinguished his entire character. Mrs. Cregan governed both her husband and her son; but the means which she employed in moulding each to her own wishes, were widely different. In her arguments with the former, it was her usual practice to begin with an intreaty and end with a command. On the contrary when

she sought to work upon the inclinations of Hardress, she opened with a command, and concluded with an intreaty. It was indeed, as Hardress had frequently experienced, a difficult task to withstand her instances, when she had recourse to the latter expedient. Mrs. Cregan possessed all the national warmth of temperament and liveliness of feeling. Like all naturally generous people, whose virtue is rather the offspring of a kindly heart than a well-regulated understanding, Mrs. Cregan was not more boundless in her bounty than in her exaction of gratitude. She not only looked for gratitude to those whom she had obliged, but was so exorbitant as to imagine that all those likewise whom she really wished to serve should return her an equal degree of kindness; and actually evince as lively a sense of obligation as if her wishes in their favour had been deeds. Alas! in this selfish world, we are told that real benefits are frequently forgotten by the receiver,

and sometimes repaid by cold unkindness or monstrous hostility. It is no wonder then that Mrs. Cregan should have sometimes found people slow to appreciate the value of her vain desires.

While Hardress was still murmuring some sentiment of passionate admiration in the ear of his visionary bride, he was awakened by the pressure of a light finger on his shoulder. He looked up and beheld a lady in a broad-leaved beaver hat, and ball dress, standing by his bed-side, and smiling down upon him with an air of affection and reproof. Her countenance, though it had already acquired in a slight degree that hardness of outline which marks the approach of the first matronal years, was striking, and even beautiful in its character. The forehead was high and commanding, the eye of a dark hazel, well opened, and tender and rapid in its expression. The entire face had that length of feature which painters employ in their

representations of the tragic muse, and the character of the individual had given to this natural conformation a depth of feeling which was calculated to make a strong and even a gloomy impression on the imagination of the beholder. Her person likewise partook of this imposing character, and was displayed to some advantage by her dress, the richness of which was perfectly adapted to her lofty and regal air. It consisted of a beautiful poplin, a stomacher set off with small brilliants, and a rich figured silk petticoat, which was fully displayed in front. The skirt of the gown parted and fell back from either side, while a small hoop, occupying the position of the modern Vestris, imparted to this interesting portion of the figure a degree of fashionable slimness and elegance. An amber necklace, some enormous broches, and rings containing locks of hair, the bequest of three succeeding generations completed the decorations of her person.

"You are a pretty truant," she said, "to absent yourself for a whole fortnight together, and at a time too when I had brought a charming friend to make your acquaintance. You are a pretty truant. And immediately on your return, instead of showing any affectionate anxiety to compensate for your inattention, you run off to your sleeping chamber, and oblige your foolish mother to come and seek you?"

"My trim, mother, would have hardly become your drawing-room."

"Or looked to advantage in the eyes of my lovely visitor?"

"Upon my word, mother, I had not a thought of her. I should feel as little inclined to appear wanting in respect to you, as to any visitor to whom you could introduce me."

"Respect?" echoed Mrs. Cregan, while she laid the light away upon the dressing-table (in such a position, that it could shine full and bright upon the features of her son,) and took a

chair near his bed-side. "Respect is fond of going well dressed, I grant you ; but there is another feeling, Hardress, that is far more sensitive and exquisite on points of this nature, a feeling much more lively and anxious than any that a poor fond mother can expect. Do not interrupt me ; I am not so unreasonable as to desire that the course of human nature should be inverted for my sake. But I have a question to ask you. Have you any engagement during the next month, that will prevent your spending it with us ? If you have, and if it be not a very weighty one, break it off as politely as you can. You owe some little attention to your cousin, and I think you ought to pay it."

Hardress looked displeased at this, and muttered something about his inability to see in what way this obligation had been laid upon him.

"If you feel no disposition to shew a kindness to your old play-fellow," said his mother,

endeavouring to suppress her vexation, "you are of course at liberty to act as you please. You, Hardress, in your own person, owe nothing to the Chutes, unless you accept their general claim, as near relatives of mine."

"They could not, my dear mother, possess a stronger. But this is a sudden change. While I was in Dublin, I thought that both you and my father had broken off the intercourse that subsisted between the families, and lived altogether within yourselves."

"It was a foolish coldness that had arisen between your aunt and myself on account of some free, some very free, expressions she had used with regard to your father. But when she fell ill, and my poor darling Anne was left to struggle, unassisted, beneath the weight of occupation that was thrown thus suddenly upon her hands, my self-respect gave way to my love for them both. I drove to Castle-Chute, and divided with Anne the cares of nurse-tending

and house-keeping, until my dear Hetty's health was in some degree restored. About a fortnight since, by the force of incessant letter-writing, and the employment of her mother's influence, I obtained Anne's very reluctant consent to spend a month at Killarney. Now, my dear Hardress, you must do me a kindness. I have no female friend of your cousin's age, whose society might afford her a constant source of enjoyment, and in spite of all my efforts to procure her amusement, I cannot but observe, that she has been more frequently dull, than merry, since her arrival. Now you can prevent this if you please. You must remain at home while she is with us, entertain her while I am occupied, walk with her, dance with her, be her *beau*. If she were a stranger, hospitality alone would call for those attentions, and I think under the circumstances, your own good feeling will teach you, that she ought not to be neglected."

"My dear mother, do not say another word

upon the subject. It will be necessary for me to go from home sometimes ; but I can engage to spend a great portion of the month as you desire. Send for a dancing master to-morrow morning. I am but an awkward fellow at best, but I will do all that is in my power."

" You will breakfast with us then to-morrow morning, and come on a laking-party? It was for the purpose of making you promise, I disturbed your rest at this hour ; for I knew there was no calculating in what part of Munster one might find you after sunrise."

" How far do you go ? "

" Only to Innisfallen."

" Ah! dear, dear, Innisfallen! I will be with you certainly, mother. Ah, dear Innisfallen! Mother, do you think that Anne remembers the time when Lady K—— invited us to take a cold dinner in Saint Finian's oratory? It is

one of the sweetest days that ever brightened my recollection. I think I can still see that excellent lady laying her hand upon Anne Chute's shoulder, and telling her that she should be the little princess of this little fairy isle. Dear Innisfallen! If I were but to tell you, mother, how many a mournful hour that single happy one has cost me!"

"Tell me of no such thing, my boy. Look forward, and not back. Reserve the enjoyment of your recollections until you are no longer capable of present and actual happiness. And do not think, Hardress, that you make so extraordinary a sacrifice in undertaking this pretty office. There is many a fine gentleman in Killarney who would gladly forego a whole season's sport for the privilege of acting such a part for a single day. I cannot describe to you the sensation that your cousin has produced since her arrival. Her beauty, her talents, her elegance and her accomplishments are the subject of conversation

in every circle. You will acquire a greater brilliance as the satellite of such a planet than if you were to move for ages in your own solitary orbit. But if I were to say all that I desire, you should not sleep to-night; so I shall reserve it to a moment of greater leisure. Good night, Hardress, and sleep soundly, for the cockswain is to be at the door before nine."

Mrs. Cregan was well acquainted with the character of her son. The distinction of attending on so celebrated a beauty as his cousin was one to which his vanity could never be indifferent, and nothing could be more agreeable to his pride than to find it thus forced upon him without any effort of his own to seek it. To be thus, out of pure kindness, and much against his own declared wishes, placed in a situation which was so generally envied! To obtain likewise (and these were the only motives that Hardress would acknowledge to his own mind,) to obtain an opportunity of softening his mother's preju-

dices against the time of avowal, and of forwarding the interest of his friend Kyrle Daly in another quarter. All these advantages were sufficient to compensate to his pride for the chance of some mortifying awkwardness, which might occur through his long neglect of, and contempt for, the habitual forms of society.

And of all the places in the world, thought Hardress, Killarney is the scene for such a debut as this. There is such an everlasting fund of conversation. The very store of common-place remarks is inexhaustible. If it rains, one can talk of the Killarney showers, and tell the story of Mr. Fox; and if the sun shine, it must shine upon more wonders than a hundred tongues as nimble as those of Fame herself could tell. The teasing of the guides, the lies of the boatmen, the legends of the lakes, the English arrivals, the echoes, the optical illusions, the mists, the mountains. If I were as dull as Otter, I could be as talkative as the barber in the Ara-

bian Nights on such a subject, and yet without the necessity of burthening my tongue with more than a sentence at a time.

Notwithstanding these encouraging reflections, Hardress, next morning, experienced many a struggle with his evil shame before he left his chamber to encounter his mother's charming visitor. What was peculiar in the social timidity of this young gentleman lay in the circumstance that it could scarcely ever be perceived in society. His excessive pride prevented his often incurring the danger of a mortifying repression, and it could hardly be inferred from his reserved and, at the same time, dignified demeanour, whether his silence were the effect of ill temper, stupidity, or bashfulness. Few indeed ever thought of attributing it to that lofty philosophical principle to which he himself pretended; and there was but one, in addition to Kyrle Daly, of all his acquaintances on whom it did not produce an unfavourable impression.

After having been summoned half a dozen times to the breakfast parlour, and delaying each time to indulge in a fresh glance at the mirror, to adjust his hair, which had now too much, and now too little powder; to alter the disposition of his shirt frill, and consummate the tying of his cravat, Hardress descended to the parlour, where to his surprise, he found his cousin seated alone. She was simply dressed, and her hair, according to the fashion of unmarried ladies at the period, fell down in black and shining ringlets on her neck. A plain necklace of the famous black oak of the lakes, and a Maltese cross formed from the hoof of the red deer, constituted the principal decorations of her person. There was a consciousness, and even a distress in the manner of their meeting. A womanly reserve and delicacy made Anne unwilling to affect an intimacy that might not be met as she could desire; and his never-failing pride prevented Hardress from seeming to desire a

favour that he had reason to suppose might not be granted him.

Accordingly, the great store of conversation which he had been preparing the night before, now, to his astonishment, utterly deserted him, and he discovered that subject is an acquisition of little use while it is unassisted by mutual confidence, and good will, among the interlocutors. Nothing was effective, nothing told; and when Mrs. Cregan entered the parlour, she lifted her hands in wonder, to see her fair visitor seated by the fire, and reading some silly novel of the day (which happened to lie near her) while Hardress affected to amuse himself with Creagh's dog Pincher at the window, and said repeatedly within his own heart, "Ah, Eily, my own, own Eily! you are worth this fine lady a hundred times over!"

"Anne! Hardress! My lady, and my gentleman! Upon my word, Hardress, you ought to be proud of your gallantry. On the

very first morning of your return, I find you seated at the distance of half a room from your old play-fellow, and allowing her to look for entertainment in a stupid book! But, perhaps you have not spoken yet? Perhaps you do not know each other? Oh, then it is *my* duty to apologize for being out of the way. Miss Chute, this is Mr. Hardress Cregan; Mr. Hardress Cregan, this is Miss Chute." And she went through a mock introduction in the formal manner of the day.

The lady and gentleman each muttered something in reply. "We *have* spoken, ma'am," said Hardress.

"We *have* spoken, ma'am!" echoed Mrs. Cregan. "Sir, your most obedient servant! You have made a wonderful effort, and shown a great deal of condescension! You *have* spoken! You have done every thing that a gentleman of so much dignity and consequence was called upon to do, and you will not move a

single footstep farther. But perhaps," she added, glancing at Anne, "perhaps I am dealing unjustly here. Perhaps the will to hear, and not the will to say, was wanted. If the fault lay with the listener, Hardress, speak! It is the only defence that I will think of admitting."

"Except that the listener might not be worth the trial," said Anne, in the same tone of liveliness, not unmingled with pique, "I do not know how he can enter such a plea as that."

"Oh! Hardress! Oh fie, Hardress! There's a charge from a lady."

"I can assure you," (said Hardress, a little confused, yet not displeased with the manner in which his cousin took up the subject,) "I am not conscious of having deserved any such accusation. If you call on me for a defence, I can only find it in a simple recrimination. Anne has been so distant to me ever since my return from Dublin, that I was afraid I had offended her."

“Very fair, sir, a very reasonable plea, indeed. Well, Miss Chute,” continued Mrs. Cregan, turning round with an air of mock gravity to her young visitor, “why have you been so distant to my son since his return, as to make him suppose he had offended you?” And she stood with her hands expanded before her, in the attitude of one who looks for an explanation.

“Offended me?” said Anne, “I must have been exceedingly unreasonable indeed, if I had quarrelled with any thing that was said or done by Hardress, for I am sure he never once allowed me the opportunity.”

“Oh! oh!” exclaimed Mrs. Cregan, clasping her hands, and bursting into a fit of laughter. “You grow more severe. If I were a young gentleman, I should sink down with shame after such an imputation as that.”

Hardress found himself suddenly entrapped in a scene of coquetry. “Might not one do

better, mother," he said, running lightly across the room, and taking a seat close by the side of his cousin—" Might not one do better by endeavouring to amend?"

" But it is too late, ~~sin~~," said Anne, affecting to move away, " My aunt Cregan is right, and I *am* offended with you. Don't sit so near, if you please. The truth is, I have made up my mind not to like you at all, and I never will change it, you may be certain."

" That is too hard, Anne. ~~We~~ are old friends, you should remember. What can I have done to make you so inveterate?"

" That's right, ~~Hardress~~," said Mrs. Cregan, who had now taken her place at the breakfast table—" do not be discouraged by her. Give her no peace, until she is your friend. But in' the meantime, come to breakfast. The cockswain has been waiting this half hour."

The same scene of coquetry was continued during the morning. Hardress, who was no less

delighted ~~than~~ surprised at this change of manner in his lovely cousin, assumed the part of a duteous knight, endeavouring, by the most assiduous attentions to conciliate the favour of his offended "ladye ;" and Anne maintained with a playful dignity, the inexorable coldness and reserve which was the prerogative of the sex in the days of chivalry and sound sense. We hate those, says Bruyere, who treat us with pride ; but a smile is sufficient to reconcile us. In proportion to the chagrin which the fancied coldness of his fair cousin had occasioned to the quick-hearted Hardress, was the pleasure which he received from this unexpected and intimate turn of manner. And now it was, moreover, that he became capable of doing justice to the real character of the young lady. No longer embarrassed by the feeling of strangeness and apprehension which had kept her spirits back on their first meeting, Anne now assumed to him that ease and liveliness of manner with which she was accustomed

to fascinate her more familiar acquaintances. He was astonished even to a degree of consternation at the extent both of her talents and her knowledge. On general subjects, he found, with extreme and almost humiliating surprise, that her information very nearly approached his own; and in a graceful and unostentatious application of that knowledge to familiar subjects she possessed the customary female superiority.

We will not intrude so far upon the peculiar province of the guide-books as to furnish any detail of the enchanting scenery through which our party travelled in the course of the forenoon. Every new sight that he beheld, every new hour that he spent in the society of his cousin, assisted in disabusing his mind of the prejudice which he had conceived against her, and supplying its place by a feeling of strong kindness. It happened, likewise, that in the course of the day, many circumstances occurred

to render him well satisfied with the company of his new associates. The disposition to please and be pleased was general amongst them; and Hardress was flattered by the degree of attention which he received, not only from his own party, but from his mother's fashionable acquaintances, to whom he was introduced in passing. Life, spirit, courtliness of manner, and kindness of feeling, governed the tone of conversation throughout the day; and Hardress bore his part, in quality of host, with a degree of success and effect that was a matter of astonishment to himself. One or two of the younger ladies only were heard to say that Mr. Cregan was a little inattentive, and that he seemed to imagine there was not another lady of the party beside Miss Chute; but it is suspected that even those pretty murmurers were by no means the least sensible of the merit of the person whom they censured. When the evening drew near, and

the party left the island for home, Hardress was once more surprised to find, that although he had been speaking for nearly half the day, he had not once found it necessary to make allusion to the Killarney showers, the optical deceptions, or the story of Charles James Fox.

When he parted from the merry circle in order to fulfil his promise to Eily, a feeling of blank regret fell suddenly upon his heart, like that which is experienced by a boy, when the curtain falls at the close of the first theatrical spectacle which he has ever witnessed. His mother, who knew him too well to press any enquiry into the nature of his present engagement, had found no great difficulty in making him promise to return on the next day, in order to be present at a ball, which she was about to give at the cottage. The regret which Anne manifested at his departure, (to her an unexpected movement) and the cordial pleasure with

which she heard of his intention to return on the next morning, inspired him with a feeling of happiness, which he had not hitherto experienced since his childhood.

The next time he thought of Anne and Eily at the same moment, the conjunction was not so unfavourable to the former as it had been in the morning. "There is no estimating the advantage," he said within his own mind, "which the society of so accomplished a girl as that must produce on the mind and habits of my dear little Eily. I wish they were already friends. My poor little love! how much she has to learn before she can assume with comfort to herself the place for which I have designed her. But women are imitative creatures. They can more readily adapt themselves to the tone of any new society, than we, who boast a firmer and less ductile nature; and Eily will find an additional facility in the good nature and active kindness

of Anne Chute. "I wish from my heart they were already friends."

As he finished this reflection, he turned his pony off the Gap-road, upon the crags which led to the cottage of Mrs. Naughten.

CHAPTER XX.

HOW HARDRESS HAD A STRANGE DREAM
OF EILY.

THE burst of rapture and affection with which he was received by Eily, banished for the moment every other feeling from the mind of the young husband. Her eyes sparkled, and her countenance brightened at his entrance, with the innocent delight of a child. Her colour changed, and her whole frame was agitated by a passion of joy, which Hardress could scarcely have anticipated if his absence had been prolonged to a much more considerable time. He

could not avoid feeling, that Eily was as far beyond his cousin in gentleness of feeling, in ready confidence and winning simplicity of manner, as she was excelled by the latter in dignity of mind and of demeanour, in elegant knowledge, and in correctness of taste.

They stood at the open door, Eily being yet encircled by the arm of her husband, and gazing on his face, while the expression of rapture that had illumined the countenances of both, faded gradually away into a look of calm and settled joy. On a sudden, their ears were startled by a hoarse, husky, and yet piercing voice, which seemed to proceed from a crag, that sheltered the cottage on the left side. Looking upward, Hardress beheld a woman standing on the turf, whose gesture and appearance showed her to be one of a race of viragos who are now less numerous in the country parts of Ireland, than they were some twenty years since. Her face and hair announced a Spanish

origin; her dress consisted of a brown stuff garment, fastened up at the back with a row of brass buttons, and a muslin cap and ribbon, considerably injured by the effect of long possession. An old drab *jock*, soiled and stained by many a roll in the puddle of the mountain fairs, was superadded; and in her right hand she grasped a short, heavy oak stick; which, if one might judge by the constant use she made of it in enforcing her gestures, was as necessary to her discourse as the famous thread of Lord Chesterfield's orator. Her eyes were bloodshot from watching and intemperance; and the same causes, joined to a habitual violence of temper, had given to her thin, red and streaky countenance, a sudden and formidable turn of expression.

“Ha! ha! my children! my two fine, clever children, are ye there? Oh, the luck o’ me, that it was n^ot a lad like you I married; a clever boy, with the red blood running under

his yellow skin, like that sun over behind the clouds, instead of the mane, withered disciple that calls my house his own this day. Look at the beauty of him! look at the beauty of him! I might have been a lady if I liked. Oh, the luck o' me! the luck o' me! Five tall young men, every one of 'm a patthern for a faction, and all, all dead in their graves, down, down, an' no one left but that picthur o' misery, that calls himself my husband. If it was n't for the whiskey," she added, while she came down the crags, and stood before the pair, "my heart would break with the thoughts of it. Five tall young men, brothers every one, an' they to die, an' he to live! Would n't kill the Danes to think of it! Five tall young men! Gi' me the price of the whiskey."

"Indeed I will not, Poll. You have had enough already."

"No, nor half!" shouted the Amazon. "A dhram is enough, but two dhrams is n't half

enough, an' I had only two. Coax him, *ma chree, ma lanuv*, to gi' me the price o' the whiskey."

Eily, who stood in great terror of this virago, turned a supplicating glance on Hardress.

"Your young mistress," said the latter, "would not become a participator in the sin of your drunkenness."

"*My* Mistress! The rope-maker's daughter! *My* Misthress! Eily-na-thiadarucha! Welcome from Gallow's Green, my misthress! The poor silly crathur! Is it because I call you with the blood of all your fathers in your veins, a gentleman, my masther, that I'd call her a lady, and my mistress? Gi' me the price o' the whiskey!"

"I shall not, Poll. Go back."

"Gi' me the price o' the whiskey, or I'll tear the crooked eyes out o' your yellow face! Gi' me it, I tell you, or I'll give my misthress more kicks than ha'-pence, the next time I

catch her alone in the house, an' you away coorting an' divarting at Killarney."

"Cool yourself, Poll, or I'll make you cool."

"You a gentleman! There is'nt a noggin o' genteel blood in the veins o' your whole seed, breed, an' generation. You have a heart! you stingy bone-polishing, tawny faced, beggarly, mane spirited mohawk, that had'nt the spirit to choose between poverty an' dignity! You a gentleman! The highest and the finest in the land was open to you, an' you had'nt the courage to stand up to your fortune. You a heart! Except a lady was to come an' coort you of herself, sorrow chance she'd ever have o' you or you of her. An' signs on, see what a mistress you brought over us! I wondher you had the courage to spake to her itself. While others looked up, you looked down. I often seen a worm turn to a buttherfly, but I never heerd of a buttherfly turning to a worm in my life

before. You a heart ! I'll lay a noggin, if the doctors open you when you die, they wo'n't find such a thing as a heart in your whole yellow carcass, only a cold gizzard, like the turkies."

Hardress turned pale with anger at this coarse, but bitter satire. "Do stop her mouth, my dear Hardress," murmured Eily, whose total want of pride rendered her almost incapable of resentment. "Do silence her. That woman makes me afraid for my very life."

"Never entertain the least apprehension on that subject, Eily. There is one key to the good will of Fighting Poll, by which you may be always certain of keeping your place in her affections. It is whiskey. Keep her in whiskey, and you keep her faithful. Nor need you ever fear to be out-purchased ; for Poll has just good principle enough to prefer a little whiskey with honesty, to a great deal obtained as the wages of treason. Well, Poll," he continued, turning

to that Amazon, "you are too many for me. Here is half-a-crown to drink my health, and be a good girl."

"Half-a-crown!" shouted the woman, catching the glittering coin as Hardress sent it twirling through the air. "I knew you were your father's son, for all! I knew 'tis o' purpose you were. I knew you had the nature in you, after all! Ha! here comes Phil and Danny at last. Come, sthrip, now, Phil! Sthrip off the coat at once, an' let us see if M^c Donough laid the horsehip over your shoulders to-day."

The man only returned her a surly glance in answer to this speech.

"What M^c Donough is this, Phil," said Hardress, "what horsewhipping do you speak of, Poll?"

"I'll tell you, sir," returned Phil, "He is our landlord, an' the owner of all the land about you, as far as you can see, an' far-

ther. He lives about a mile away from us, an' is noted for being a good landlord to all, far an' near. Only there's one fashion he has, and that's a troublesome one to some of his people. As he gives all manner of lases at a reasonable rent himself, he wishes that his land should be sublet reasonable also, which makes him very contrary whenever there's does be any complaints of hard usage from the undher tenants. I'll tell you his plan when he finds any thing o' the sort afther his head tenants. He doesn't drive 'em, nor be hard upon 'em, nor ax for the arrears, nor one ha'p'orth, only sends his sarvant boy down to their house with a little whip-handle, about so big, that's as well known upon his estate, as the landlord's own face. Well, the sarvant boy comes in, as it might be to my cabin there, (if he hard any thing again' me) and without ever saying one word, he walks in to the middle o' the floore, an' lays the whip handle upon the table, and walks out again

without ever sayin' one word. Very well; the tenant knows when he sees the whip, that he must carry it up to his landlord next morning, as sure as he has a head upon his shoulders; an' take it from me, there's many lads among 'em have no great welcome for the sight of it. Well, up they go to the great house, an' there they ax for the masther, an' they carry the whip handle into his parlour, where he locks the door upon 'em, an' if they can't well account for what they done, he makes 'em sthrip, and begins flaking 'em with a horsewhip until their back is all one griskin; an' then he tells 'em to go about their business, an' let him hear no more complaints in future. I thought it was a ghost I seen myself, last night when I found the whip handle on my own table. But I made all clear when I seen the master."

"That is pushing his authority to a feudal extent," said Hardress.

"A what, sir?" asked Phil, looking puzzled.

"Nothing, Phil, nothing. Poll, go in now, and get supper ready in your mistress's room."

"Let Phil get it," returned the amazon, "I want to step over to the *sthreet** for a pound o' candles."

"A pound o' candles!" echoed her helpmate with a sneering emphasis.

"'Iss, what 'else?" exclaimed Poll, grasping her baton, and looking back on him with a menacing gesture.

"You know best what else, yourself," [said the husband. "We all know what sort o' candles it is you're going for. I lay my life you're afther gettin' money from the masther. But ay with you, don't think I wan't to stop you. Your absence is betther company than your presence any day in the year." So saying he preceded out hero and heroine into

the cottage, muttering, in a low voice, a popular distich :

“ Joy be with you, if you never come back,
Dead or alive, or o’ horseback.”

In the course of this evening, Eily remarked that her husband, though affectionate as she could desire, was more silent and abstracted than she had ever seen him, and that he more frequently spoke in correction of some little breach of etiquette, or inelegance of manner, than in those terms of eloquent praise and fondness which he was accustomed to lavish upon her. One advantage, however, of Eily’s want of penetration was, that the demon of suspicion never disturbed the quiet of her soul ; and it required the utmost, and the most convincing, evidence of falsehood, to shake the generous and illimitable confidence which she reposed in any person who was once established in her affections.

While she felt therefore some little pain on her husband's account, she never experienced the slightest trouble on her own. She endeavoured with cheerfulness to adapt herself to his wishes, and though in this she could not become immediately successful, he would have owned a rigid temper, indeed, if it had not been softened by the submissive sweetness of her demeanour.

And Hardress was softened, though not satisfied by her gentle efforts. He observed on this evening a much more considerable number of those unpleasing blemishes than he had on any other, and the memory of them pursued him even into his midnight slumbers, where Fancy, as usual, augmented their effect upon his mind. He dreamed that the hour had come on which he was to introduce his bride to his rich and fashionable acquaintances, and that a large company had assembled at his mother's cottage to honour the occasion.

Nothing however could exceed the bashfulness, the awkwardness, and the homeliness of speech and accent, with which the rope-maker's daughter received their compliments; and to complete the climax of his chagrin, on happening to look round upon her during dinner, he saw her in the act of peeling a potatoe with her fingers! This phantom haunted him for half the night. He dreamed, moreover, that, when he reasoned with her on this subject, she answered him with a degree of pert vulgarity and impatience which was in "discordant harmony" with her shyness before strangers, and which made him angry at heart, and miserable in mind.

The dreams of passion are always vivid, distinct, and deeply impressive. The feeling of anger and annoyance remained on the mind of Hardress even after he awoke, and although he never failed to correct and dispel the sensation, whenever it arose, yet throughout the

whole of the following morning, a strong and disagreeable association was awakened whenever he looked upon Eily.

Before he again left her, Hardress explained the nature of his present position with respect to his mother, and informed his wife of the necessity which existed for spending a considerable portion of the month which was to come at his father's cottage. Eily heard this announcement with pain and grief, but without remonstrance. She cried, like a child, at parting with him; and after he had ridden away, remained leaning against the jamb of the door with her moistened handkerchief placed against her cheek, in an attitude of musing sorrow. He had promised to return on the second day after, but how was she to live over the long, long interval? A lonesomeness of heart, that was in mournful accordance with the mighty solitudes in which she dwelt, fell down and abode upon her spirit.

On that night Hardress was one of the gayest revellers at his mother's ball. Anne Chute, who was, beyond all competition, the star of the evening, favoured him with a marked and cordial distinction. The flattering deference with which he was received, by all with whom he entered into conversation during the night, surprized him into ease and fluency; and the success of his own eloquence made him in love with his auditory. When it is considered that this was the very first ball he had ever witnessed since his boyhood, and that his life, in the interim had been the life of a recluse, its effect upon his mind will cease to be a matter of surprize. The richness of the dresses—the liveliness of the music—the beauty of the fair dancers—the gaiety of their young partners—the air of elegant mirth that filled the whole apartment—produced a new and delicious sensation of hap-

piness in the susceptible temper of Hardress. Our feelings are so much under the government of our habits, that a modern English family in the same rank might have denied the praise of *comfort* to that which in the unaccustomed eyes of Hardress wore the warmer hue of luxury; for he lived at a time when Irish gentlemen fostered a more substantial pride than at present; when appearances were comparatively but little consulted, and the master of a mansion cared not how rude was the interior, or how ruinous the exterior of his dwelling, provided he could always maintain a loaded larder, and a noisy board. The scene around him was not less enervating to the mind of our hero because the chairs which the company used were of plain oak, and the light from the large glass lustre fell upon coarse unpapered walls, whose only ornament consisted of the cross-barred lines drawn with the trowel in the rough grey mortar. Many of those who are accustomed to

scenes of elegant dissipation, might not readily give credence to the effect which was wrought upon his feelings by circumstances of comparatively little import. The perfumed air of the room, the loftiness of the ceiling, the festooning of the drapery above the windows, the occasional pauses and changes in the music, all contributed to raise his mind into a condition of peculiar and exquisite enthusiasm, which made it susceptible of deep, dangerous, and indelible impressions. The wisdom of religion, in prescribing a strict and constant government of the senses, could not be more apparent than, on an occasion like this, when their influence upon the reason became almost as potent and absorbing as that of an internal passion.

In the midst of this gaiety of heart and topping fulness of mind, a circumstance occurred to throw it into a more disturbed and serious, but scarce less delightful, condition. The intervals

in the dancing, were filled up by songs from the company, and Anne Chute in her turn was called on for her contribution of melody. Hardress was leaning over her chair, and looking at the music-book, which she was turning over leaf after leaf, as if in search of some suitable piece for the occasion.

"Ah, this will do I think," said Anne, pausing at a manuscript song, which was adapted to an old air, and running a rapid prelude along the keys of the instrument. The letters H. C. were written at the top of the page, and Hardress felt a glow like fire upon his brow the instant he beheld them. He drew back a little out of the light, and listened, with an almost painful emotion, to the song which the fair performer executed with an ease and feeling that gave to the words an effect beyond that to which they might themselves have pretended. They were the following :

I.

A place in thy memory, dearest,
 Is all that I claim,
 To pause and look back when thou hast
 The sound of my name.
 Another may woo thee, nearer,
 Another may win and wear;
 I care not though he be dearer,
 If I am remembered there.

II.

Remember me—not as a lover
 Whose hope was cross'd,
 Whose bosom can never recover
 The light it hath lost.
 As the young bride remembers the mother
 She loves, though she never may see;
 As a sister remembers a brother,
 O, dearest! remember me.

III.

Could I be thy true lover, dearest,
 Couldst thou smile on me,
 I would be the fondest and nearest
 That ever loved thee!
 But a cloud on my pathway is glooming
 That never must burst upon thine;
 And Heaven, that made thee all blooming,
 Ne'er made thee to wither on mine.

IV.

Remember me when I—O, remember,
~~My calm~~, light love ;
Though bleak as the blasts of November
My life may prove,
That life will, though lonely, be sweet
If its brightest enjoyment should be
A smile and kind word when we meet,
And a place in thy memory.

CHAPTER XXI.

HOW HARDRESS MET A STRANGE TRIAL.

“MOTHER, can you tell me why Anne Chute appears so abstracted and so reserved in her manner these few days past? Is she ill? Is she out of spirits? Is she annoyed at any thing?”

Hardress Cregan, who spoke this speech, was resting with his arm on the sash of one of the cottage windows. Mrs. Cregan was standing at a table in the centre of the room,

arranging several small packages of plate, glass, and china, which had been borrowed from various neighbours on occasion of ~~the~~ ball. At a little distance stood old Nancy in her blue cloak and hood, awaiting the commands of her mistress; who as she proceeded with her occupation, glanced, at intervals, a sharp and ~~inquiring~~ eye at her son.

“Here, Nancy, take this china to Mrs. Geogheghan, with my compliments, and tell her that I’m very much obliged to her—and, for your life, you horrible old creature, take care not to break them.”

“Oyeh, Murther! is it I? Fake ’em sure, that I wont, so.”

“And tell Mike, as you are going down stairs, to come ~~hither~~. I want to send him with those spoons to Miss Macarthy.”

“Mike is’nt come back yet, ma’am, since he went over with the three-branch candlestick to Mrs. Crasbie.”

"He is a very long time away, then."

"Can you tell me, mother," said Hardress, after in vain expecting an answer to his former queries, "can you tell me, mother, if Anne Chute has had any displeasing news from home lately?"

"Well, Nancy," continued Mrs. Cregan appearing not to have heard her son run away with your parcel, and deliver your message as you have been told, and hurry back again, for I have three more places to send you to before dinner."

"Allilu! my ould bones will be fairly wore from undher me, with the dint o' thrallivantin;" muttered Nancy as she left the room.

"I beg your pardon, Hardress, my dear. Were you not speaking? My attention is so occupied by those affairs that I have not a head for any thing besides. This is one of the annoyances produced by your father's

improvidences. He will not purchase those things, and I am obliged to borrow them, and to invite their owners into the bargain. I should not mind the borrowing but for that, as they are, generally speaking, very inferior in quality to the articles they lend me. In my thoughts, the latter always occupy so much more important a place than their possessors, that in sending a note of invitation to Mrs. Crosbie, (or Crasbie as Nancy calls her,) the other day, I was on the point of writing 'Mrs. Cregan presents her compliments to the three-branched candlestick.'—But were you not speaking to me?"

"I merely asked you, mother, if you knew the cause of the change which has lately appeared in Anne Chute's manner, and which I have observed more especially since the night of the ball?"

"I do," said Mrs. Cregan.

Hardress turned his face round, and looked as if he expected to hear more.

"But before I inform you," continued Mrs. Cregan, "you must answer me one question. What do you think of Anne Chute?"

"Think of her, mother?"

"Think of her, mother! You echo me, like the ancient in the play. I hope it is not that you have got any such monster in your thoughts as may not meet the light."

Hardress shook his head with a smile of deep meaning. "Indeed, mother," he said, "it is far otherwise. I am ashamed to trust my lips with my opinion of Anne Chute. She is, in truth, a fascinating girl. If I were to tell you, in the simplest language, all that I think, and all that I feel in her favour, you would say that you had found out a mad son in Hardress. She is indeed an incomparable young woman."

"A girl," said his mother, who heard this speech with evident satisfaction—"a girl, who is far too amiable to become the victim of disappointed feelings."

"Of disappointed feelings?"

"Another echo! Why you seem to have caught the mocking spirit from the lakes. I tell you she is ~~within~~ the danger of such an event."

"How is that, mother?"

"Close that door and I will tell you. I see you have remarked the increasing alteration in her manner. If I should entrust you with a lady's secret, do you think you know how to venerate it?"

"Why so, mother?"

"Ah, that's a ~~safe~~ answer. Well, I think I may trust you without requiring a pledge. Anne Chute has met with the usual fate of young ladies at her age. She is deep in love."

Hardress felt the hot blood gather upon his breath, when he heard these words. "You are jesting, mother," he said at length, and with a forced smile.

"It is a sad jest for poor Anne, however," said Mrs. Cregan with much seriousness. "She is completely caught indeed. I never saw a girl so much in love in my life."

"He is a happy fellow," said Hardress, after a pause, and in a deep voice, "he is either a very stupid, or a very happy fellow, whom Anne Chute distinguishes with her regard. And happy he must be, for a stupid lover could never press so wearily upon the remembrance of such a girl. He is a very happy fellow."

"And yet, to look at him, you would suppose he was neither the one nor the other," said his mother.

"What is his name?"

"Can you not guess?"

The name of Kyrle Daly rose to the lips of Hardress, but from some undefinable cause, he was unable to pronounce it. "Guess?" he repeated, "not I. Captain Gibson?"

"Pooh! what an opinion you have formed of Anne, if you suppose her to be one of those susceptible misses to whom the proximity of a red coat, in country quarters, is an affair of fatal consequence."

"Kyrle Daly, then?"

"Poor Kyrle, no. But that I think she has already chosen better, I could wish it were he, poor fellow! But you do not seem inclined to pay your cousin a compliment this morning. Do you not think you guess a little below her worth?"

"Not in Kyrle Daly. He is a lover for a queen. He is my true friend.

"*That*," said his mother with emphasis, "might be some recommendation."

Hardress gazed on her as if altogether at a loss.

“ Well, have you already come to a stand ? ” said Mrs. Cregan. “ Then I believe I shall not insist on your exposing your own dullness any longer. Come hither, Hardress, and sit near me.”

The young gentleman took a chair at his mother’s side, and awaited her further speech with increasing interest.

“ Hardress,” she said, “ I have a claim, independent of my natural right, to your obedience ; and I must insist, in this one instance at least, on its not being contested. Listen to me. I have now an object in view, to the accomplishment of which I look forward with a passionate interest, for it has no other aim than the completion of your happiness ; a concern, my beloved boy, which has always sat closest to my heart, even from your childhood. I have no child but you. My other little babes are with their Maker. I have none left but you, and I think I feel my heart yearn towards you

with all the love, which, if those angels had ~~not~~ flown from me, would have been divided amongst them."

She paused, affected ; and Hardress lowered his face in deep and grateful emotion.

"It is, I think, but reasonable, therefore," Mrs. Cregan continued, "to desire your concurrence in a project which has your own happiness only for its object. Are you really so dull of perception as not to be aware of the impression you have made on the affections of Anne Chute?"

"That *I—I* have made?" exclaimed Hardress, with a confusion and even a wildness in his manner, which looked like a compound of joy and terror. "That *I*—did you say, mother?"

"That *you* have made," repeated his mother. "It is true indeed, Hardress. She loves you. This fascinating girl loves you long and deeply. This incomparable young woman with whose

praises you dare not trust your tongue, is pining for your love in the silence of her chamber. This beautiful and gifted creature, who is the wonder of all who see, and the love of all who know her, is ready to pour forth her spirit at your feet in a murmur of expiring fondness. Use your fortunes. The world smiles brightly on you. I say again, Anne Chute is long, deeply, and devotedly your own."

Hardress drank in every accent of this poisonous speech, with that fatal relish which is felt by the infatuated Eastern, for his draught of stilling tincture. While he lay back in his chair, however, to enjoy the full and swelling rapture of his triumph, a horrid remembrance suddenly darted through his brain, and made him start from his chair as if he had received a blow.

"Mother," said he, "you are deceived in this. It is not, it cannot be, the fact. I see the object of which you speak, and I am sure

your own anxiety for its accomplishment has led you to miscalculate. My own surmises are not in unison with yours.

"My dear child," replied his mother, I have a far better authority than surmise for what I say. Do you think, my love, that I would run the hazard of disturbing your peace without an absolute assurance of the truth of my statement? I have an authority that ought to satisfy the most distrustful lover, and I will be guilty of a breach of confidence, in order to put your mind at rest, for I am certain of you. It is the confession, the reluctant and hardly won confession, of my darling Anne herself."

Again, a revulsion of frightful rapture rushed through the frame of the listener, and made him resume his chair in silence.

"When we came here first," continued Mrs. Cregar, "I could perceive that there was a secret, although I was far from suspecting its nature. The first glimpse of light that

broke upon the mystery was produced by accident. You remember poor Dalton, our old huntsman? I happened to speak to Anne of his attachment to you, and could at once observe that her interest for the man was ardently awakened."

"I remember, I remember like a dream," said Hardress, raising his finger in the manner of one endeavouring to strengthen an indistinct recollection, "Poor Dalton told me Anne had told him. Anne? No, no," he added, in confusion, "he named no one. He said, a person in this house had been kind to him. I was prevented from enquiring farther."

"That person," said Mrs. Cregan, "was Anne Chute. From the moment of that conversation my eyes were opened; and I felt like one who has suddenly discovered the principle of an intricate and complicated system. I saw it in her silence, while your arrival was delayed; I saw it, on the morning of your meeti

saw it, throughout that day; I saw it, in her dissembled grief, in her dissembled joy. Poor, dear girl! I saw it, in the almost childlike happiness that sparkled in her eyes when you came near us, and in the sudden gloom that followed your departure. For shame, my child! Why are you so dull of perception? Have you eyes? Have you ears? Have you a brain to comprehend, or a heart to estimate, your good fortune? It should have been your part, not mine, to draw that dear acknowledgment from the lips of Anne, last night."

To this observation, Hardress replied only by a low moan, which had in it an expression of deep pain. "How, mother," he at length asked, in a hoarse tone, "by what management did you draw this secret from her?"

"By a simple process. By making it worth her while to give me her confidence. By telling her what I have long since perceived, though it may possibly have escaped your own observation,

that her passion was not unrequited; that you were as deeply in love with her, as she with you."

"Me! me in love! You could not, you would not, surely, mother, speak with so much rashness," exclaimed Hardress, in evident alarm.

"Why—do you *not* love her, then?"

"Love her, mother?"

"I see you have not yet done with the echoes."

"I love her as a cousin should love a cousin, nothing more."

"Aye, but she is no cousin of yours. Come! It must be either *more* or *less*. Which shall I say?"

"Neither. It is in that light I have always looked upon Anne. I could not love her less. I would not, dare not love her more."

"Dare not? You have got a strange vocabulary for a lover. What do you mean by

‘dare not?’ What mighty daring is requisite to enable a young man to fall in love with a young lady of whose affection he is already certain? The daring that is necessary for wedlock, is an old bachelor’s sneer, which should never be heard on lips that are ruddy with the blood of less than forty summers. Why dare you not love Anne Chute?”

“Because by doing so, I should break my faith to another.”

Mrs. Cregan fixed her eye on him, as if somewhat stunned. “What do you say, Har- dress?” she murmured, just above her breath.

“I say, mother, that my heart and faith are both already pledged to another, and that I must not break my engagement.”

“Do you speak seriously?”

“I could not jest on this subject, if I were so inclined.”

“And dare you tell me this?” Mrs. Cregan exclaimed, starting up from her seat with a

sudden fierceness of manner. "You have no daring! You dare not love the love that I have chosen for you, and you dare tell me to my face of such a boldness as this! But dare me not too far, I warn you, Hardress. You will not find it safe."

"I dare tell the truth when I am called on," replied Hardress, who never respected his mother so little, as in her moments of passion and authority; "in all places, and at all hazards, even including that of incurring my mother's displeasure."

"Listen to me, Hardress," said his mother, returning to her seat, and endeavouring to suppress her anger, "it is better we should fully understand each other."

"It is, mother; and I cannot choose a better time to be explicit than the present. I was wrong, very wrong, in not taking an earlier opportunity of explaining to you the circumstances in which I stand. But it is better even now

than later. Mother," he continued, moving near to her, and taking her hand between his, with a deprecating tenderness of manner, "forgive your own Hardress! I have already fixed my affections, and pledged myself to another."

Mrs. Cregan pressed her handkerchief against her face, and leaned forward on the table, which position she maintained during the dialogue which followed.

"And who is that other?" she asked, with a calmness that astonished her son. "Is she superior to Anne Chute in rank or fortune?"

"Far otherwise, mother."

"In talent then, or manner?"

"Still far beneath my cousin."

"In what then consists the motive of preference, for I am at a loss?"

"In every thing that relates to acquirement," said Hardress, "she is not even to be compared to Anne Chute. It is in virtue, alone, and in gentleness of disposition, that she can

pretend to an equality. I once believed her lovelier, but I was prejudiced."

Mrs. Cregan now raised her head, and showed by the change in her appearance what passionate struggles she had been endeavouring to overcome. The veins had started out upon her forehead, a dull fire shone in her eyes, and one dark tress of hair, uncurled by dampness and agitation, was swept cross her temples. "Poor, low-born, silly, and vulgar!" she repeated with an air of perplexity and suppressed anger. Then, assuming an attitude of easy dignity, and forcing a smile, she said, "Oh, my dear Hardress, you must be jesting, for I am sure you could not make such a choice as you describe."

"If it is a misfortune," replied Hardress, "I must only summon up my philosophy, mother, for there is no escaping it."

Mrs. Cregan again pressed her hand upon her brow for some moments, and then said,

“ Well, Hardress, let us conduct this discussion calmly. I have got a violent shooting in my head, and cannot say so much as I desire. But listen to me, as I have done to you. My honour is pledged to your cousin for the truth of what I have told her. I have made her certain that her wishes shall be all accomplished, and I will not have my child’s heart broken. If you are serious, Hardress, you have acted a most dishonourable part. Your conduct to Anne Chute ~~would have deceived—~~ it *has* deceived, the most unbiassed amongst your acquaintances. You have paid her attentions which no honourable man could offer while he entertained only a feeling of indifference towards their object.”

“ Mother! Mother! how can you make such a charge as that? Was it not entirely, and reluctantly, in compliance with your own injunctions that I did so?”

“ Aye,” replied Mrs. Cregan, a little struck,

“but I was not then aware of your position. Why did you not *then* inform me of all this? Let the consequences, sir, of your duplicity fall on your own head, not on my poor girl’s, nor mine. I could not have believed you capable of such a meanness. Had you then discovered all, it would have been in time for the safety of your cousin’s happiness, and for my own honour, for that too is staked in the issue. What, sir? Is your vanity so egregiously that, for its gratification merely, you would interfere with a young girl’s prospects in life, by filling up the place at her side to which others, equal in merit and more sincere in their intentions, might have aspired? Is not that consideration alone (putting aside the keener disappointment to which you have subjected her) enough to make your conduct appear hideous?”

The truth and justice of this speech left Hardress without a word.

"You are already contracted, at every fire-side in Kerry and Limerick also," continued his mother, "and I am determined that there shall be no whispering about my own sweet Anne. You must perform the promise that your conduct has given."

"And my engagement?"

"Break it off!" exclaimed Mrs. Cogan, with a burst of anger, "archly, and with a feeling of decorum." "If you wish to make a sensible thing of your marriage, you must be a victim."

Chute. "I have not yet had

with having to give for the sacrifice. Now take your choice. If you, I had rather die, nay, I shall see you in your coffin than matched below your rank. You are yet unable to cater for your own happiness, and you would assuredly lay up a fund of misery for all your coming years. Now, take your choice. If you wed as you are, you shall have all

the happiness that rank, and wealth, and honour, and domestic affection, can secure you.—If against my wish—if you resist me, enjoy your vulgar taste, and add to it all the wretchedness that extreme poverty can furnish, for whether I live or die, (as indeed I shall be careless on that subject henceforward,) you never shall possess a guinea of your inheritance, or make your choice.”

“Farewell, then, mother,” said Hardress, rising, with a proud dignity, and moving forward, “I am already in a way that will never move.

Farewell, then, mother, I am grateful to you for all your former kindness, but it is impossible that I will please you in this. As to the poverty with which you intend to punish me, I can face that consequence without much anxiety, after I have ventured to incur the hazard of your anger.”

He was already at the door when his

mother recalled him with a softened voice. "Hardress," she said, with tears in her eyes, "I mistake my heart entirely. It cannot afford to lose a son so easily. Come hither, and sit by me, my own beloved boy. You know not, Hardress, how I have loved, and love you. Why will you anger me, my child? I never ~~angered~~ you, ~~even~~ when you were an infant, at my bosom. I never denied you any thing, in all my life. I never gave you a hard word, or look, since you were a child in my arms. What have I done to you, Hardress? Even supposing that I have acted with any rashness in this, why will you insist on my suffering to it?"

"My dear mother——"

"If you knew how I have loved you, Hardress; but you can never know it, for it was shown most frequently and fondly when you were incapable of acknowledging or appreciating it. If ~~you~~ knew how disin-

terestedly I have watched and laboured for your happiness, even from your boyhood, you would not so calmly resign your mind to the idea of such a separation. Come, Hardress, we must yet be friends. I do not press you for an immediate answer, but tell me you will think of it, and think more kindly. Bid me but smile on Anne when I meet her next. Nay, don't look troubled, I shall not speak to her until I have your answer, I will only smile upon her—that's my darling Hardress."

"But, mother——"

"Not one word more. At least, Hardress, my wishes are worth a little consideration. Look there!" she suddenly exclaimed, laying her hand on the arm of her son, and pointing through the open window, "Is that not worth a little consideration?"

Hardress looked in that direction, and beheld a sight which might have proved dangerous to

the resolution of a more self-regulated spirit. It was the figure of his cousin standing under the shade of a lofty arbutus, (a tree which acknowledges Killarney alone of all our northern possessions, for its natal region.) A few streaks of the golden sunshine streamed in upon her figure, through the boughs, and quivered over the involutions of her drapery. She was without a bonnet, and her short black ringlets, blown loose about her rather pale and careful countenance, gave it somewhat of the character of an Ariadne, or a Penthesilea. She walked towards the house, and every motion of her frame seemed instinct with a natural intelligence. Hardress could not (without a nobler effort than he would use) remove his eyes from this beautiful vision, until it turn in the gravel walk concealed it from his view, and it disappeared among the foliage, as a lustrous star is lost in a mass of autumnal clouds.

"Mother," said Hardress, "I will think

on what you have said. May heaven defend, and guide me! I am a miserable wretch, but I will think of it. Oh, mother, my dear mother, if I had confided in you, or you in me! Why have we been thus secret to each other? But pardon me! It is I alone that am deserving of that reproach, for you were contriving for my happiness only. Happiness! What a vain word that is! I never shall be happy more! Never, indeed! I have destroyed my fortune."

"Hush, boy, I hear Anne's foot upon the lobby. I told her you would walk with her to-day."

"Me walk with her?" said Hardress with a shudder. "No, no, I cannot, mother. It would be wrong. I dare not, indeed."

"Dare not again?" said Mrs. Cregan, smiling. "Come, come, forget this conversation for the present, and consider it again at your leisure."

"I will, I will think of it," repeated the young man, with some wildness of manner. "May heaven defend and guide me! I am a wretch already."

"Hush! hush!" said his mother, who did not attach too much importance to those exclamations of mental distress; "you must not let your mistress hear you praying in that way, or she will suppose she has frightened you."

"*My mistress, mother!*"

"Pooh, pooh! your cousin, then. Do'nt look so terrified. Well, Hardress, ~~I am obliged~~ to you."

"Aye, mother, but don't be misled by—"

"Oh, be in no pain for that. I understand you perfectly. Remain here, and I will send your cousin to you in a few minutes."

It would have at once put an end to all discussion of this subject, if Hardress had informed his mother that he was in fact already married. He was aware of this, and yet he

could not tell her that it was so. It was not that he feared her anger, for that he had already dared. He knew that he was called on in honour, in justice, and in conscience, to make his parent aware of the full extent of his position, and yet he shunned the avowal, as he would have done a sentence of despair.

CHAPTER XXII.

HOW THE TEMPTATION OF HARDRESS PROCEEDED.

DURING the few weeks that followed the conversation just detailed, Eily perceived a rapid and a fearful change in the temper and appearance of her husband. His visits were fewer and shorter than before, and when he did come, his manner was restrained and conscious in an extraordinary degree. His eye looked troubled, his voice was deep and broken, his cheek grew pale and fleshless, and a gloomy air, which might be supposed the mingled re-

sult of discontent and dissipation, appeared in all his person. He no longer conversed with that noisy frankness and gaiety which he was accustomed to indulge in all societies where he felt perfectly at his ease. To Eily he spoke sometimes with coldness and impatience, and very often with a wild affection that had in it as much of grief as of tenderness. To the other inmates of the cottage he was altogether reserved and haughty, and even his own boatman seldom cared to tempt him into a conversation. Sometimes Eily was inclined to think that he had escaped from some unpleasing scenes at home, his demeanour during the evening was so abstracted and so full of care. On other occasions, when he came to her cottage late at night, she was shocked to discover about him the appearances of a riotous indulgence. Born and educated as she was in the Ireland of the eighteenth century, this circumstance would not have much dis-

turbed the mind of our heroine, but that it became gradually more frequent of occurrence, and seemed rather to indicate a voluntary habit than that necessity to which even sober people were often subjected, when they mingled in the society of Irish country gentlemen of that period. Eily thus experienced, for the first time, and with an aching spirit, one of the keenest anxieties of married life.

“Hardress,” she said to him one morning when he was preparing to depart, after an interval of gloomy silence, long unbroken. “I wont let you go among those fine ladies any more, if you be thinking of them always when you come to me again.”

Her husband started like one conscience struck, and looked sharply round upon her.

“What do you mean?” he said, with a slight contraction of the brows.

“Just what I say, then,” said Eily, smiling

and nodding her head, with a pretty affectation of authority. "Those fine ladies mus'n't take you from Eily. And I'll tell you another thing, Hardress: whisper!" she laid her hand on his shoulder, raised herself on tiptoe, and murmured in his ear, "I'll not let you among the fine gentlemen either, if that's the teaching they give you."

"What teaching?"

"Oh, you know, yourself;" Eily continued nodding and smiling: "it is a teaching that you would never learn from Eily if you spent the evenings with her as you used to do in the beginning. Do you know is there e'er a priest living in this neighbourhood?"

"Why do you ask?"

"Because I have something to tell him that lies upon my conscience."

"And would you not confess your failings to an affectionate friend, Eily, as well as to a holier director?"

“ I would,” said Eily, bending on him a look of piercing sweetness—“ if I thought he would forgive me afterwards, as readily.”

“ Provided always that you are a true penitent,” returned Hardress, reaching her his hand.

“ There is little fear of that ; ” said Eily. “ It would be well for me, Hardress, if I could as easily be penitent for heavier sins.”

After a moment's deep thought, Eily resumed her playful manner, and placing both her hands in the still expanded one of her husband, she continued, “ Well then, sir, I'll tell you what's troubling me. I'm afraid I'm going wrong entirely, this time back. I got married, sir, a couple o' months ago, to one Mr. Hardress Cregan, a very nice gentleman that I'm very fond of.”

“ Too fond, perhaps ? ”

“ I'm afraid so, rightly speaking, although I ~~am~~ he doesn't think so. But he told

me when he brought me down to Killarney, that he was going to **speak** to his friends, [the brow of the listener darkened,] and to ask their forgiveness for himself and Eily. And there's nearly two months now, since I came, and what I have to charge myself with, sir, is, that I am too fond of my husband, and that I do'n't like to vex him by speaking about it, as may be it would be my ~~duty~~ ^{duty} to do. And, besides, I do'n't keep my husband to proper order at all. I let him stop out sometimes for many days together, and then I'm very angry with him, but when he comes, I'm so foolish and so glad to see him, that I can't look cross, or speak a hard word, if I was to get all Ireland for it. And more than that, again; I'm not at all sure how he spends his time while he is out, and I do'n't ever question him properly about it. I know there are a great many handsome young ladies where he goes to, and a ~~deal of~~ ^{number of} gentlemen that are very pleasant company after dinner, for

indeed, my husband is often more merry than wise, when he comes home to me late at night, and still Eily says nothing. And besides all this, I think my husband has something weighing upon his mind, and I don't make him tell it to me, as a good wife ought to do, and I'd like to have a friend's advice, as you're good enough to offer it, sir, to know what I'd do. What do you think about him, sir? Do you think any of the ladies has taken his fancy? Or do you think he's growing tired of Eily? Or that he doesn't think so much of her now that he knows her better? What would you advise me to do?"

"I am rather at a loss," said Hardress, with some bitterness in his accent, "it is so difficult to advise a *jealous* person."

"Jealous!" exclaimed Eily with a slight blush. "Ah, now I'm sorry I came to you at all, for I see you know nothing about me,

since you think that's the way. I see now that you don't know how to advise me at all, and I'll leave you there. What would I be jealous of?"

"Why, of those handsome young ladies that your husband visits."

"Ah, if I was jealous that way," said Eily, with a keen and serious smile, "that isn't the way I'd show it."

"How then, Eily?"

"Why, first of all, I wouldn't as much as think of such a thing, without the greatest reason in the world, without being down-right sure of it, and if I got that reason, nobody would ever know it, for I wouldn't say a word, only walk into that room there, and stretch upon the bed, and die."

"Why, that's what many a brutal husband, in such a case, would exactly desire."

"So itself," said Eily, with a flushed, and kindling cheek—"so itself. I wouldn't be long in his way, I'll engage."

"Well then," Hardress said, rising and addressing her with a severe solemnity of manner, "my advice to you is this. As long as you live, never presume to inquire into your husband's secrets, nor affect an influence which he never will admit. And if you wish to avoid that great reason for jealousy of which you stand in fear, avoid suffering the slightest suspicion to appear; for men are stubborn beings, and when such suspicions are wantonly set afloat, they find the temptation to furnish them with a cause almost irresistible."

"Well, Hardress," said Eily, "you are angry with me, after all. Didn't you say you would forgive me? Oh, then, I'll engage I'd be very sorry to say any thing, if I thought you'd be this way."

"I am not angry," said Hardress, in a tone of vexation. "I do forgive you," he added, in an accent of sharp

reproof, "I spoke entirely for your own sake."

"And would'nt Hardress allow his own Eily her little joke?"

"Joke!" exclaimed Hardress, bursting into a sudden passion, which made his eyes water, and his limbs shake as if they would have sunk beneath him. "Am I become the subject of your mirth? Day after day my brain is verging nearer and nearer to utter madness, and do you jest on that? Do you see this cheek? You count more hollows there than when I met you first, and does that make you merry? Give me your hand! Do you feel how that heart beats? Is that a subject, Eily, for joke or jest? Do you think this face turns thin and yellow for nothing? There are a thousand and a thousand horrid thoughts and temptations burning within me daily, and eating my flesh away by inches. The devil is laughing at me, and Eily joins

“ Oh, Hardress—Hardress !— ”

“ Yes !—you have the best right to laugh, for you are the gainer. Curse on you ! Curse on your beauty—curse on your folly—for I have been undone by you. Let go my knees ! Let go my arm ! I hate you ! Take the truth, I’ll not be poisoned with it. I am sick of you, you have disgusted me ! I will ease my heart by telling you the whole. If I seek the society of other women, it is because I find not among them your meanness and vulgarity. If I get drunk, and make myself the beast you say, it is in the hope to forget the iron chain that binds me to you ! ”

“ Oh, Hardress,” shrieked the affrighted girl, “ you are not in earnest now ? ”

“ I am ! *I do not* joke ! ” her husband exclaimed with a hoarse vehemence. “ Let go my knees ! you are sure enough of me. I am bound to you too firmly.”

“ Oh, my dear Hardress! Oh, my own husband, listen to me! Hear your own Eily for one ~~moment~~. Oh, my poor father!”

“ It ~~is~~ from me! Forgive me! I know I am to blame, I am greatly to blame, dear Hardress, but forgive me! I left my home and all for you—oh, do not cast me off! I will do any thing to please you, I never will open my lips again—only say you did not mean all that! Oh, heaven!” she continued, throwing her head back, and looking upward with expanded mouth and eyes, while she maintained her kneeling posture and clasped her husband’s feet. “ Merciful Heaven, direct him! Oh, Hardress, think how far I am from home! think of all you promised me, and how I believed you! Stay with me for a while at any rate! Do not——”

On a sudden, while Hardress was still

struggling to free himself from her arms, without doing her a violence—Eily felt a swimming in her head, and a cloud upon her sight. The next instant she was motionless.

The first face which she beheld on recovering from her insensibility was that of Poll Naughten, who was seated in a low chair, and supporting Eily's head against her knees, while she was striking her in the open palm with a prodigious violence.

“ Ah, there she dhraws the breath,” said Fighting Poll. “ Oh, wirra, missiz, what bróught you out on your face and hands in the middle of the floore, that way ? ”

Eily muttered some unmeaning answer and remained for some minutes struggling with the consciousness of some undefined horror. Looking around at length, and missing the figure of Hardress, she lay back once more, and burst into a fit of hysterical weeping. Phil Naughten, who was smoking a short pipe by the fire-

side, said something in Irish to his wife, to which the latter replied in the same language, and then turning to Eily, said :—

“ Will you take a drop of any thing, a-chree ? ”

Eily raised her hand in dissent.

“ Will you come in, and take a sthretch on the bed then ? ”

To this Eily answered in the affirmative, and walked with the assistance of her hostess into her sleeping chamber. Here she lay during the remainder of the day, the curtain suffered to fall so as to keep the broad sunshine from her aching eyes and head. Her reflections, however, on the frightful and sudden alteration which had taken place in her condition were cut short, ere long, by a sleep, of that sound and dreamless nature which usually supervenes after an access of passionate excitement or anxiety.

In the meantime Hardress hurried along

the Gap' road with the speed of one who desires to counteract by extreme bodily exertion the turbulence of an uneasy spirit. As he passed the lonely little bridge, which crosses the stream above the Black Lake, his attention was suddenly arrested by the sound of a familiar voice which appeared to reach him from the clouds. Looking over his shoulder to the summit of the Purple Mountain, he beheld Danny Mann, nearly a thousand feet above him, moving toward the immense pile of loose stones, (from the hue of which the mountain has derived its name,) and driving before him a small herd of goats, the property of his brother-in-law. Turning off the road, Hardress commenced the ascent of this toilsome eminence, partly because the difficulty afforded a relief to his spirits, and partly because he wished to converse with his dependant.

Although the day was fine, and sometimes cheered with sunshine near the base of the

mountain, its summit was wrapped in mist, and wet with incessant showers. The scenery around was solitary, gigantic, and sternly barren. The figure of some wonder-hunting tourist, with a guide-boy bearing his port-folio and umbrella, appeared at long intervals, among the lesser undulations of the mountain side, and the long road, which traversed the gloomy valley, dwindled to the width of a meadow foot-path. On the opposite side of the enormous ravine, the grey and misty Recks still raised their crumbling summits far above him. Masses of white mist gathered in sullen congress between their peaks, and, sometimes floating upward in large volumes, were borne majestically onward, catching a thousand tints of gold and purple from the declining sun. Sometimes a trailing shower, of mingled mist and rain, would sweep across the intervening chasm, like the sheeted spectre of a giant, and present to the eye of the spectator that appearance which supplied all

imagination of Ossian with its romantic images. The mighty gorge, itself, at one end, appeared to be lost and divided amid a host of mountains tossed together in provoking gloom and mystery. Lower down, it opened upon a wide and cultivated champaign, which, at this altitude, presented the resemblance of a rich mosaic, of a thousand colours, and afforded a bright contrast to the barren and shrubless gloom of the solitary vale itself. As Hardress approached the summit, this scene of grandeur and of beauty was shut out from his view by the intervening mist, which left nothing visible but the peak on which he stood, and which looked like a barren islet in a sea of vapour. Above him was a blue sky, broken up with masses of cloud against which the rays of the sun were refracted, with various effect, according to their degrees of density and altitude. Occasionally, as Hardress pressed onward through the heath, a heavy grouse would spring up at his feet,

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challenge, and wheel to the other side of the mountain. Sometimes also, as he looked downward, a passing gust of wind would draw aside the misty veil that lay between him and the world, and cause the picture once more to open on his sight.

His attendant now met, and greeted, him as usual. "It's well for you, Master Hardress, dat has'nt a flock o' goats to be hunting after dis mornin';—my heart is broke from 'em, dat's what it is. We turn 'em out in de mornin,' and dough dey have plenty to ate below dere, dey never stop till dey go to de top o' the mountain, nothing less would do for 'em; like many o' de Christians demselves, dey 'll be mounting always, even when 'tis no good for 'em."

"I have no remedy," said Hardress musing, "and yet the thought of enduring such a fate is intolerable."

"What a fine day dis would be for de

water, Master ? ” continued his servant —
“ You don’t ever care to take a sail now, sir ? ”

“ Oh, Kyrle ! Kyrle Daly, what a prophetic truth was in your words ! Giddy, head-long wretch that I have been ! I wish that my feet had grown to my mother’s hearth when I first thought of evading her controul, and marrying without her sanction.” He paused in a mood of bitter retrospection. “ I’ll not endure it ! ” he again exclaimed, starting from his reverie, “ It shall not be without recall. I will not, because I cannot. Monster ! Monster, that I am ! Wed one, and woo another ! Both now are cheated ! Which shall be the victim ? ”

The devil was at his ear, and whispered, “ Be not uneasy, hundreds have done the same before you.”

“ Firm as dat mountain stands, an’ as it stood dis hundred, aye, dis tousand year, may be,” continued Danny Mann, “ still an’ ell, to

look up dat way at dem great loose stones, dat look as if dey were shovelled up above us by some joyants or great people of ould; a body would tink it hardly safe to stand there onder 'em, in dread dey'd come tumblin' down; may be, an' make *smiddereens* of him, bless de mark ! Would'nt he now, master Hardress ? ”

The person so addressed turned his eyes mechanically in the same direction. A kind of desperate satisfaction was visible on his features, as the idea of insecurity, which his servant suggested, became impressed upon his mind. The latter perceived and understood its expression on the instant.

“ Dere's something troublin' you, Master Hardress ; dat I see plain enough. An' tis'nt now, nor to day, nor 'isterday, I seen it, aider. Is dere anyting Danny Mann can do to sarve you ? If dere be, say de word dis moment, an' I'll be bail he'll do it before long.”

"Danny," said Hardress after a pause, "I am troubled. I was a fool, Danny, when I refused to listen to your advice upon one occasion."

"An' dat was de time when I tould you not to go again' de missiz, an' to have no call to Eily O'Connor."

"It was."

"I tought it would be dis way. I tought, all along, dat Eily was no wife for you, master Hardress. It was not in natur she could be, a poor man's daughter, widout money, or manners, or book-larnen', or onc ha'p'ort'. I told you dat, master Hardress, but you would'nt hear me, be any means, an' dis is de way of it, now."

"Well, well, 'tis done, 'tis done," said Hardress, with sullen impatience, "I was to blame, Danny, an' I am suffering for it."

"Does she know herself de trouble she is

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"I could not keep it from her. I ~~did not~~ know, myself, how utterly my dislike had prevailed within me, until the occasion arose for giving it utterance, and then it came forth, at once, like a torrent. I told her what I felt; that I hated, that I was sick of her! I could not stop my tongue. My heart struck me for the base unkindness, the ungrateful ruffianism of my speech, and yet I could not stop my tongue. I have made her miserable, and I am myself accursed. What is there to be done? Have you only skill to prevent mischief? Have you none to remedy?"

Danny took thought for a moment. "Sorrow trouble would I ever give myself about her," he said at last, "only send her home packin' to her fader, an' give her no thanks."

"And with what face should I appear before my honourable friends, when that old rope-maker should come to demand redress for his insulted child, and to claim her husband's pro-

mise? Should I send Eily home, to earn for myself the reputation of a faithless villain?"

"I never tought o' dat," said Danny, nodding his head. "Dat's a horse of anoder colour. Why, den, I'll tell you what I'd do. Pay her passage out to Quaybec, and put her aboard of a three-master, widout ever sayin' a word to any body. I'll tell you what it is, master Har-dress. Do by her as you'd do by that glove you have on your hand. Make it come off as well as it come on, and if it fits too tight, take de knife to it."

"What do you mean?"

"Only gi' me de word, as I said before, an' I'll engage Eily O'Conuor will never trouble you any more. Do'nt ax me any questions at all, only if you're agreeable, take off dat glove an' give it to me for a token. Dat 'll be enough. Lave de rest to Danny."

A doubtful, horrible sensation of fear and anxiety gathered upon the heart of the listener,

and held him for a minute fixed in breathless expectation. He gazed upon the face of his servant, with an expression of gaping terror, as if he stood in the presence of the Arch Tempter himself. At length he walked up to the latter, laid his open hand upon his neck, and then drawing his fingers close, until the fellow's face was purple with blood, he shook him as if he would have shaken his joints out of their sockets.

"Villain!" he exclaimed, with a hoarseness and vehemence of tone, which gave an appalling depth to his expressions. "Dangerous villain and tempter! If you ever dare again to utter a word, or meditate a thought of violence towards that unhappy creature, I will tear you limb from limb between my hands!"

"Oh, murder, Master Hardress! Dat de hands may stick to me, sir, if I tought a ha'p'ort o' harm!"

"Do you mark me well, now? I am

quite in earnest. Respect her, as you would the highest lady in the land. Do as she commands you, without murmuring. If I hear her say, (and I will question her upon it) that you have leered one glance of those blood-longing eyes upon her, it shall be their last look in this world."

"Oh, Vo! Dat I may never die in sin, Master Hardress, if—"

"Begone! I am glad you have opened my eyes. I tread more safely now. My heart is lighter! Yet that I should have endured to be so tempted! Fellow, I doubt you for worse than you appear! We are here alone; the world, the busy world, is hid beneath us, and we stand here alone in the eye of the open heaven, and without roof or wall, to screen us, even in fancy, from the downright reproach of the beholding angels. None but the haughty and insulting Lucifer, himself, could think of daring Providence upon the threshold of his

own region. But be you fiend, or mortal, I defy and dare you ! I repel your bloody temptation ! I tell you, fiend or mortal, that my soul abhors your speech and gesture both. I may be wretched and impious ; I may send up to heaven a cry of discontent and murmuring ; the cry of blood shall never leave this earth for me. Blood ! *Whose* blood ? Hers ? Great heaven ! Great heaven defend me ! ” He covered his face with his hands, and bent down for a moment in dreadful agitation ; then suddenly starting up, and waving his hand rapidly, he continued, “ Away ! away at once, and quit my sight. I have chosen my doom. My heart may burn for years within my breast, if I can find no other way to soothe it. I know how to endure, I am wholly ignorant of guilt like this. Once more,” he added, clenching his fist, and shaking it towards his startled dependant, “ Once more, I warn you, mark my words, and obey them.”

So saying, he hurried down the hill, and was hid in the ascending mist; while his affrighted servant remained gaping after him, and muttering mechanically such asseverations as, “ Dat I may never sin, Master Hhardress! Dat de head may go to de grave wit me! Dat I may be happy! Dat de hands may stick to me, if I tought any harm!”

More than half of the frantic speech of Hhardress, it may be readily imagined, was wholly unintelligible to Danny, who followed him down the mountain, half crazed with terror, and not a little choked into the bargain.

CHAPTER XXIII.

HOW AN UNEXPECTED VISITOR ARRIVED IN EILY'S COTTAGE.

TOWARDS night-fall, Eily awoke with that confused and strange feeling which a person experiences, who has slept at an unaccustomed hour. The sun had already set ; but the red and faintly lustrous shadow of her window, which was thrown on the opposing wall, showed that his refracted light was yet strong and bright on the horizon. While she lay back, endeavouring to recall the circumstances which brought her into her present situation, a voice assailed her ear.

her start in sudden alarm from her reclining posture. It was that of a person singing in a low voice outside her window the following words :—

“ As I roved out on a fine summer morning,
 A speculating most curiously,
 To my surprise I soon espied
 A charming fair one approaching me.
 I stood awhile—

here the melodist knocked gently at the door
 of the cottage—

I stood awhile in deep meditation,
 Contemplating what I should do ;
 Till, at length, recruiting all my sensations,
 I thus accosted the fair Colleen rue.”*

At the close of the verse, which was prolonged by the customary nasal twang, the singer knocked a little more loudly with the

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“ Oh, was I Hecthor, that noble victhor,
Who died a victim to the Grecian skill;
Or was I Paris, whoase deeds were vaarious,
As an arbithraator on Ida's hill.
I'd roam through Asia, likewise Arabia,
Or Pennsylvania—

here he knocked again—

Or Pennsylvania looking for you,
Through the burning ragions, like famed Orpheus,
For one embrace of you, Colleen rue.”

“ I am ruined! I am undone!” thought
Eily, as she listened in deep distress and fear,
“ my father has found me out, and they are all
come to look for me! Oh, Hardress! Hardress!”

“ They're all dead, or dhraming here, I
believe,” said the singer; “ I'm in fine luck, if
I have to go down the ould gap again afther
night-fall.” Stimulated by this reflection, he
turned his back to the door, and began kicking
against it with his heel, while he continued his
song :

" And are you Aurora, or the goddess Flora,
 Or Eutherpasia, or fair Vanus bright ?
 Or Halen fair, beyond compare,
 Whoam Paris stole from the Grecian's sight ?
 Thou fairest creature, how you've enslaved me !
 I'm intoxicated by Cupid's clue,
 Whoase golden notes and infatuations,
 Have deranged my ideas for you, Colleen rue."

Here the same air was taken up by a shrill and
 broken female voice, at a little distance from
 the house, and in the words which follow :—

" Sir, I pray be aisy, and do not tease me
 With your false praises most jestingly ;
 Your golden notes and insinuations
 Are vaunting and deceiving me.
 I'm not Aurora, nor the goddess Flora,
 But a rumble to all men's view,
 Who's here condoling my situation,
 And my appellation is the Colleen rue."

" You're not Aurora ? " muttered the first
 voice. " Visha, dear knows, it is'nt aisy to
 ———— 'd be the dhroll Auroras
 figure they cut. Ah !
 added, raising and

changing his voice as the shadow of the female figure crossed the window of Eily's apartment, "How are *you* this evening ma'am? I hope you got well over your voyage that morning?"

"What voyage? Who is it I have there at all?" said Poll in a tone of surprise. "Oh, Lowry Looby! Oh, ma gra hu! how is every inch of you, Lowry? It raises the very cockles o' my heart to see you."

"Purty well, indeed, as for the health, Mrs. Naughten, we're obleest to you."

"Oh, vo, vo! An' what brought you into this part of the world, Lowry? It's a long time since you an' I met."

"'Tis as good as two months, a' most, I b'lieve."

"Two months, eroo? 'Tis six years if its a day."

"Oh 'iss, for good; but I mane the time we met in the 'cottage behind' at the dairy

farm, the night o' the great starm, when ye were near being all lost, in the boat, if it was'nt the will o' Heaven."

"The dairy farm! lost in the boat! I do'nt know what is it you're talken' about at all, man. But come in, come in, Lowry, and take a sate. Stop, here's Phil. Phil, eroo, this is Lowry Looby, that you heard me talk of being a friend o' the Hewsans, formerly."

Thus introduced, Phil and Lowry both took off their hats, and bowed repeatedly, and with a most courteous profundity of obeisance. The door was then opened, and a polite contest arose as to the right of precedence between the gentlemen, which was finally decided in favour of Lowry, as the visitor.

"Well, Lowry, what news eastwards?" was the next question.

"Oh, then nothing strange, Mrs. Naughten. I was twice by this way, since I seen you that night. Coming from Cork I was to-day, when

I thought I'd step over, and see how you wor, afther the voyage. I left the horse an' car over, in Mr. Cregan's yard."

"I believe you're lost with the hunger. Phil, stir yourself, an' put down something for supper."

"Do'nt hurry yourself on my account," said Lowry, affecting an indifference which he did not feel, "I took something at Mr. Cregan's. I saw Masther Hardress there in the parlour windee, playin' chests (I think it is they called it) with Miss Anne Chute. Oh, murder, that's a darling, a beautiful lady! Her laugh is like music. Oh, dear! oh, dear! To see the the smile of her, though, an' she looking at him! It flogged the world! Mike, the boy, they have there, an' old Nancy, told me, she's greatly taken with the young masther."

"Why then, she may as well throw her cap at him."

"Why so, eroo?"

“ Oh—for reasons.”

“ There’s one thing Mike told me, an’ I’m sure I wondher I never heerd a word of it before ; that there was some talks of herself and my young mather, Mr. Kyrle Daly. I know he used to be going there of an odd time, but I never heerd any thing that way. There’s a dale that’s looking afther her, Mike tells me. Whoever gets her, they say, he’ll have as much *jewels* to fight, as will keep him going for the first quarther, any way.”

“ Tha go bragh ! ” said Phil, tossing his head, “ that’s what bothers the gentlemen. *Jewels, jewels*, always.”

“ *Jewels* always, then, just as you say, Misther Naughten,” said Lowry. “ Its what ruins ’em, body and soul. At every hand’s turn nothing but a jewel ! Let there be a conthairy look, and pistols is the word at once.”

“ An’ if a poor boy is *reflected* upon, an’ goes to a fair to thry it out, with an innocent

little kippen, O the savages! the gentlemen cry at once. O the blood thirsty villyans! And they'll go themselves and shoot one another like dogs for less raison."

"It's thrue, for you," returned Lowry. "Sure 'twould be a blessing for a man to be aiting a dhry piatie from morning till night, an' to have quietness. I'll tell you what it is, Mither Naughten. I spake for myself, of all things going, I would'nt like to be born a gentleman. They're never out o' throuble, this way, or that way. If they're not fighting, they have more things upon their mind, that would bother a dozen poor men; an' if they go divarting, ten to one they have a *jewel* before the day is over. Sure if it was a thing, two gentlemen axed a lady to dance, an' she gave in to one of 'em, the other should challenge him for to go fighting! Sure, that flogs Europe! And they have so much books to read, to be able to converse genteel before the

ladies. I'm told, a gentleman is'n't fit to shew his face in company, 'till he reads as much books as would sthretch from this to the doore over. And then to be watching yourself, an' spake Englified, an' not to ate half your 'nough at dinner, an' to have 'em all looking at you, if you took too big a bit, or done any thing again' manners, and never to have your own fling, an' let you do what you liked yourself! I would'nt lade such a life, if I got Europe. A snug stool by the fireside, a boiled piatie in one hand, a piggin o' milk in the other, and one (that I wo'nt name now) smiling overright me, that's all the gentility I'd ever ax for this world, any way. I'd a'most as lieve be born a female as a gentleman, maning no offence to the ladies, Mrs. Naughten."

"Every one to his taste, Lowry. Many men have many minds. Phil, will you go out 'now, and help Danny to put up them goats, not to have them straying over on Myles Murphy's

ground as they wor o' *Chuesday* week. I see Danny coming down the mountain."

The obedient husband did as he was commanded, and Lowry took advantage of his absence, to enter into a more confidential communication with his formidable hostess.

"Well, Mrs. Naughten, if I was to hear a person swear this upon a book, I'd say 'twas a lie he was telling me, if I did'nt see it with my own eyes."

"What is it you see?"

"Oh, then, nothing but what I'm well pleased to see. Well, I thought one that once gave themselves a bad habit, could never be broke of it again, no more than a horse could be broke of starting."

At this the virago fixed upon him a kindling and suspicious eye.

"And tell me now, Mrs. Naughten," continued Lowry, not perceiving the indication of incipient wrath, "how did it come on you

first when you dhropt the cursing that way entirely? I think I'd feel a great loss for the first week or fortnight."

"Folly on! Mистер Looby, folly on! You're welcome to your sport this evening."

"Sport? Faiks it's no sport to me, only an admiration. All the people that ever I heerd of making a vow o' the kind wor sure to break it again, if they didn't get inside of it, one way or another by shkaming. Sure there was, to my own knowledge, John O'Reilly, the blacksmith near Castle Chute, made as many vows as I have fingers an' toes again' the dhrink, an' there is'nt one of 'em but what he got the advantage of. First he med a vow he wouldn't dhrink a dhrop for six months to come, any way, either in a house or out of a house. An' sure 'tis where I found him the fortnight afther was at Mick Normile's, an' he dhrinkin' as if it was for bets, an' he sitting in a chair upon the

threshold o' the doore with a leg at this side and a leg at that. "Is that the way you're keeping your vow, Misther O'Reilly?" says I, when I seen him. "'Tis," says he "what else? sure I can dhrink here," says he, "an' no thanks, while I'm neither in the house nor out of it." And sure 'twas throe for him. Well, there's no use in talking, but some people would live where a fox would starve. Sure, of another time, he med a vow he would'nt dhrink upon Ireland ground, an' where do you think did I get him afther only sitting cross legs upon a branch o' the big beech tree near Normile's, an' he still at the ould work, dhrinking away! "Wisha, long life to you says I, if that's the way; a purty fruit the tree bears in you, says I, this morning. People o' that kind, Mrs. Naughten, has no business making vows at all, again' the dhrink, or the cursing either."

"I'm hearing to you, Lowry," said Fighting Poll, with an ominous sharpness in her accent.

“ An’ do you hould to the same plan, still, ma’am ? ”

“ What plan do you mane ? ”

“ The same plan as when I met you that night at the Dairy Cottage. Not to be talking, nor drinking, nor cursing, nor swearing, nor fighting, nor———Oh, murder, Mrs. Naughten, sure you’re not going to sthrike me inside your own doore ? ”

“ To be sure I would, when I see you daar make a hand o’ me ! ”

“ Me make a hand o’ you, woman ! What hand am I making ? ”

“ Every hand ! ” exclaimed the Penthesile, raising her voice. So saying, and with the accustomed yell of onset, she flourished her short stick, and discharged a blow at Lowry’s little head, which, if it had not been warded off by a dexterous interposition of the chair on which he had been sitting, would have left him something to think of for a week to come.

The scuffle waxed hot, and would doubtless have terminated in some serious bodily injury to the party assailed, but that the sudden re-entrance of Phil, with his brother-in-law, Danny Mann, brought it to a premature termination.

“ Poll ! Poll, ayeh ! Misther Looby ! What’s the mather ? Wor’nt ye as thick as cousins this moment ? ”

“ A’ Lowry, is dat you ? What’s all dis about ? ”

“ Don’t hould me Phil, an’ I’ll bate him while bating is good for him ! an’ that’s from this till morning.”

“ Here’s usage, Mr. Naughten ! Mr. Mann, here’s thratement ! Gi’ me my ould hat an’ let me be off, I was a fool to come at all ! And after my civility eastwards, when you come dhripping wet into the cottage ! Well, it’s all one.”

“ Whisht eroo ! ” said Danny Mann, in a

conciliating tone, "Come dis way, Lowry, I want to talk to you." And he led him out of the cottage.

Eily, who was perfectly aware of the cause of this misconception, had listened to the whole scene, at one time with intense and painful anxiety; and at another with an inclination to laugh in spite of all the difficulties and dangers by which she was surrounded. Before long, however, an idea entered her mind, which wholly detached her attention from the melay in the kitchen. She resolved to write to her father by Lowry, to make him aware, at least, of her safety and of her hope to meet him again in honour, if not in happiness. This would at least remove one great load from her mind, and prepare him for her return. While she arranged her writing materials at the small table, the thoughts of home came crowding on her, so thick and fast, that she found a difficulty in

proceeding with her task. It was an humble home, to be sure, but yet it *was* her home. He was an humble father, but he *was* her father. She painted a little picture, unconsciously, to her own mind, of that forsaken dwelling. She saw her father sitting by the turf fire, leaning forward with his elbow resting on his knee, a finger beneath his temple, and his grey watery eye ~~+~~fixed on her accustomed chair, which stood empty, on the opposite side. His hair had received another shower of silver since they parted. She scarcely dared to breathe aloud, lest she should disturb the imagined loneliness of his condition. On a sudden she figured to herself the latched door put gently back, and the form of Lowry Looby entering, with her letter in his hand. She marked the air of cold and sad indifference with which the old man recognized him, and received the letter. He looked at the direction—started—tore off

the seal and looked within, while his whole frame trembled until the gray hairs were shaken loose upon his temples. She saw the passion struggling in his throat, and her own eyes were blinded by tears; the picture here became too vivid for her feelings, and pushing the little desk aside, she sank down into her chair in a violent fit of sobbing.

While she remained in this condition, Poll Naughten entered the room, arranging her disordered head-dress, and bearing still upon her countenance the traces of the vanished storm. Its expression, however, was completely altered, when she observed the situation of Eily.

"What ails you, a ra gal?" she asked in a softened voice, "Arn't you betther afther the sleep at all?"

"Poll, do you know that man who is in the kitchen?"

"Is it Lowry Looby? Ah ha! the scoun-

dhрил! 'tis I that do, an' I'll make him he'll know me too before I part him."

"Hush! Poll, come hither. I want you to do me a service. I know this man, too."

"Why then he's little credit to you, or any one else."

"I want to caution you against saying a word of my name, while he is in the house. It would be ruinous both to your master and myself."

"Faiks, I'll engage he won't be a bit the wiser of it for Poll Naughten."

"And I wished besides, that you would give him, if he intends going to Limerick, a letter, which I will have for you in a few minutes. You need not tell him from whom it comes, do not even let him know that it is from a person in the house. And now, Poll, will you light me one of those candles, and close the window-shutters?"

This was done, and Eily commenced her letter. Before she proceeded far, however, it occurred to her, that the superscription might awaken the suspicions of Lowry, and besides, she felt a very accountable difficulty about the manner of addressing her offended parent. Finally she decided on forwarding a brief and decorous note, to "Mr. Dunat O'Leary, Hair-cutter, Garryowen,*" in which she requested him to communicate, to his old neighbour, the circumstances of which she desired the latter should be made aware.

While she folded the letter, she heard the cottage door once more open, and two persons enter the kitchen. A stillness ensued, which was first broken by the voice of Danny Mann.

"I was spaking to this boy here, Poll," he said, "an' I see 'tis all rising out of a mistake betune de two o' ye. He did'nt mane any thing by it, he tells me. Eh, Lowry?"

“It would be long from me, Mrs. Naughten, to say any thing offensive to you, or any o’ your people. Misther Mann, here, explained to me the nature of the matther. I own I did’nt mane a ha’p’worth.”

“Well, that’s enough, that’s enough. Give him the hand now, Poll,” said her husband, “and let us ate our little supper in pace.”

Eily heard no more, and the clatter of knives and forks, soon after, informed her that the most perfect harmony had been re-established amongst the parties. Nothing farther occurred to disturb the good understanding which was thus fortunately restored, or to endanger the secret of our heroine, although Lowry was not without making many enquiries as to the name and quality of the lodger in the inner room. It was a long time too, before he ceased to speculate on the nature of the letter to Foxy Dunat. On this his hostess would give him

no information, although he threw out several hints of his anxiety to obtain it, and made many conjectures of his own, which he invariably ended by tossing the head, and declaring that "It flogged the world."

CHAPTER XXIV.

HOW EILY UNDERTAKES A JOURNEY IN THE ABSENCE OF HER HUSBAND.

EILY heard Lowry Looby take his departure on the next morning, with as lively a sensation of regret as if he had been a dearer friend. After the unkindness of her husband, she trembled, while she wept, to think that it might be a long time before she could meet one more interested in her fortunes.

Happier anticipations than this might not have been so perfectly fulfilled. The first weeks of winter swept rapidly away, and Eily neither

saw, nor heard from, Hardress. Her situation became every moment more alarming. Her host and hostess, according as she appeared to grow out of favour with their patron, became at first negligent, and surly, and at last insulting. She had hitherto maintained her place on the sunny side of Poll's esteem, by supplying that virago with small sums of money from time to time, although her conscience told her that those donations were not appropriated by the receiver to any virtuous end, but now her stock was running low. Hardress, and this was from mere lack of memory, had left her almost wholly unprovided with funds.

She resolved to write to him, not with the view of obtaining mere pecuniary assistance, but in order to communicate the request which is subjoined in her own simple language :—

“MY DEAR HARDRESS,

“Do not leave me here, to spend the whole winter alone. If Eily has done any thing to offend you, come and tell her so, but remember she is now away from every friend in the whole world. Even, if you are still in the same mind as when you left me, come, at all events, for once, and let me go back to my father. If you wish it, nobody, besides us three, shall ever know what you were to your own

EILY.”

To this letter, which she entrusted to Danny the Lord, she received no answer ; neither Hardress nor his servant being seen at the cottage for more than a week after.

Matters in the mean time grew more unpleasing between Eily and her hosts. Poll treated her with the most contemptuous rudeness, and Phil began to throw out hints which it was difficult to misconceive respecting their poverty, and the unreasonableness of people thrusting idlers upon them,

when it was as much as they could do to maintain themselves in honesty. But Poll, who possessed the national recklessness of expense, whenever her husband spoke in this niggardly humour, turned on him, not in defence of Eily, but in abuse of his "mainness," although she could herself use the very same cause of invective when an occasion offered. Thus Eily, instead of commanding like a queen, as she had been promised, was compelled to fill the pitiable situation of an insecure and friendless dependant.

The wintry year rolled on, in barrenness and gloom, casting an air of iron majesty and grandeur over the savage scenery in which she dwelt, and bringing close to her threshold the first Christmas which she had ever spent away from home. The Christmas eve found her still looking anxiously forward to the return of her husband, or of his messenger. The morning had brought with it a black frost, and Eily sat down alone to a comfortless breakfast.

No longer attended with that ready deference which marked the conduct of the Naughtens while she remained in favour, Eily was now obliged to procure and arrange all the materials for her repast with her own hands. There was no butter, nor cream ; but as this was one of the great Vigils or fast days of her Church, which Eily observed with a conscientious exactness, she did not miss these prohibited luxuries. There was no fast upon sugar, however, and Eily perceived, with some chagrin, that the sugar-bowl also was empty. She walked softly to the chamber-door, where she paused for a moment, with her handkerchief placed before her cheeks in that beautiful attitude which Homer ascribes to Penelope at the entrance of the "stout-built-hall." At length she raised the latch, and opened the door to a few inches only.

"Poll," she said, in a timid and gentle voice, "do you know where's the sugar?"

"It's in the *cubbert* I suppose," was the harsh and unceremonious answer.

The fact was, Poll had begun to keep the Christmas the evening before, and treated herself to a few tumblers of hot punch, in the manufacture of which she had herself consumed the whole of Eily's sweets. And there might have been some cause of consolation, if Poll's temper had been rendered the sweeter by all the sugar she took, but this was not the case.

"There is none there, Poll," said Eily.

"Well, what hurt? Can't you put a double allowance o' crame in the tay, an' dhrink it raw, for once?"

"Ah, but this is a fast day," said Eily.

"Oyeh, choke it, for work! Well then, do as you plase, I can't help you. I have'nt a spoonful o' groceries in the house, girl, except I went for 'em, a thing I'd be very unfond to do on a morning like this."

"Well, I can do without it, Poll," said

Eily, returning to the table, and sitting down to her, unmetaphorically, bitter draught with the meekest resignation.

“ Gi’ me the money, by an’ by, when I’m going into town for the Christmas candle, an’ I’ll buy it for you, itself, an’ the tay.”

“ But I have no money, Poll.”

“ No money, iñagh ? An’ is’nt it upon yourself we’re dependin’ this way to get in the things again’ to-morrow, a Christmas day ? ”

“ Well, I have not a farthing.”

“ Did’nt you tell me, yourself, the other day, you had [a half-crown keepin’ for me again’ Handsel Monday ? ”

“ I gave it to Danny. I thought I’d have more for you before then.”

Here Poll dashed in the door with her hand, and confronted her affrighted lodger with the look and gesture of a raging Bacchanal.

“ An’ is that my thanks ? ” she screamed aloud, “ Why then, cock you up with bread and tay this morning. Go look afther Danny, now, if you want your *bruk’ast*. ” And so saying she seized two corners of the table-cloth, and upset the whole concern into the fire-place.

Terror and astonishment deprived Eily for some moments of the power of speech or motion. But when she saw Poll taking breath, for a moment, and looking around to know what farther devastation she might commit, the forlorn helplessness of her condition rushed at once upon her mind, and she fell back into her seat in a violent fit of hysterics.

This is a condition in which one woman can rarely behold another without emotion. Poll ran to her relief, uttering every sound of affectionate condolence and encouragement which arose to her lips.

“ Whisht, now, a’ ra gal ! Whisht now,

missiz, a-chree!—Oh, ma chree, m'asthora, ma. llanuv, you wor! Howl, now, a' ra gal! Oh vo! vo!—howl!—howl asthore! What ails you? Sure you know 'tis only funnin' I was, Well, see this! Tell me any thing now in the wide world I'll do for you, a' ra gal."

"Poll," said Eily, when she had recovered a certain degree of composure, "there is one thing that you can do for me, if you like, and it will relieve me from the greatest distress."

"An' what is that, a-chree?"

"To lend me one of the ponies, and get me a boy that can show me the way to Castle-Island."

"Is it goin' you're thinking of?"

"I will be here again," said Eily, "on to-morrow evening." Eily spoke this without any vehemence of asseveration, and in the quiet manner of one who had never been accustomed to have her words doubted. So irresist-

tible, too, is the force of simple truth, that Poll did not even entertain a suspicion of any intent to deceive.

“ An’ what business would carry you to Castle-Island, a’ ra gal?”

“ I have a friend there, an uncle,” Fily replied with tears starting into her eyes at the remembrance of her old preceptor. “ I am sure, Poll, that he would assist me.”

“ I’m in dhread ’tis going from uz you are now, o’ ’count o’ what I said to you. Don’t mind that at all. Stop here as long as ever you like, an’ no thanks. I’ll step across the road this minute an’ *borry* tne sugar for you if it’s it you want.”

“ No, no. I only want to do as I have told you. I’ll engage to screen you from all blame.”

“ Blame! A’ whose blame is it you think I’d be afeerd of? I’ll let you see that I’ll do what I like myself, an’ get you the pony

saddled an' all this minute. But you did'nt ate any thing hardly. Here's more bread in the cupboard, and strengthen yourself again' the road while I'm away."

She left the room, and Fily, who had little hope of succeeding so easily in her request, proceeded to make her preparations for the journey, with as much dispatch and animation as if she had discovered a sudden mode of release from all her anxieties. For a considerable time, the prospect of meeting with her uncle filled her bosom with sensations of unmingled pleasure. If she looked back, (while she tied her bonnet strings below her chin, and hurried on the plainest dress in her trunk,) if she looked back to those days in which her venerable relative presided over her evening studies, and directed their application, it was only to turn her eyes again upon the future, and hope for their speedy renovation.

Having concluded her arrangements and

cautioned Poll not to say a word of her destination, in case Hardress should come to the cottage, Eily now set out upon her lonely journey. The person whom Poll Naughten had procured her for a guide was a stout made girl, who carried an empty spirit-keg, slung at her back, in the tail of her gown, which she had turned up over her shoulders. She informed Eily that she was accustomed to go every Saturday to a town at the distance of fourteen miles, and to return in the evening with the keg full of spirits. "But this week," she continued. "I'm obleest to go twice, on account o' the Christmas day falling in the middle of it."

"And what does your employer want of so much whiskey?" said Eily, a little interested in the fortune of so hard-working a creature.

"Want o' the whiskey, inagh?" exclaimed the mountain girl, turning her black eyes on

her companion, in surprise. "Sure is'nt it she that keeps the public house above the Gap, an' what business would she have wit a place o' the kind without a dhrop o' whiskey?"

"And what are you paid, now, for so long a journey as that?"

"Defferent ways, I'm paid, defferent times. If it's a could evening when I come home, I take a glass o' the spirits itself, in preference to any thing, an' if not, the misthress pays me a penny every time."

"One penny only!"

"One penny. Indeed it's too little, but when I spake of it, the misthress tells me she can get it done for less. So I have nothin' to say but do as I'm bid."

Eily paused for some moments, while she compared the situation of this uncomplaining individual with her own. The balance of external comforts, at least, did not appear to be on the side of the poor little mountaineer.

“ And have you no other way of living now than this ? ” she asked with increasing interest.

“ Illiloo ! Is it upon a penny a week you think I’d live ? ” returned the girl, who was beginning to form no very exalted idea of her companion’s intellect.

“ Do you live with your mistress ? ”

“ No, I live with my ould father. We have a spot o’ ground beyant, for the piatees. Sometimes I dig it, but mostly the young boys o’ the place comes and digs it for us on a Sunday or a holiday morning, an’ I stick in the seed.”

“ And which is it for the sake of, the father or the daughter, they take that trouble ? ”

“ For the sake, I b’lieve, of the Almighty that made ’em both. Signs on, they have our prayers, night an’ morning.”

“ Is your father quite helpless ? ”

“ Oyeh ! long from it. He’s a turner. He

makes little boxes, and necklaces, and things that way, of the arbutus, and the black oak of the Lakes, that he sells to the English an' other quollity people that comes to see them. But he finds it hard to get the timber, for none of it is allowed to be cut, and 'tis only windfalls that he can take when the stormy saison beg'ns. Besides, there's more in the town o' Killarney that outsells him. He makes but a poor hand of it afther all."

"I wonder you have not got a sweet-heart. You are very pretty, and very good."

The girl here gave her a side-long glance, and laughed so as to exhibit a set of teeth of the purest enamel. The look seemed to say, "Is that all you know about the matter?" but her words were different in their signification.

"Oyeh, I dont like 'em for men," she said with a half smiling, half coquetish air. "They're deceivers an' rovers, I believe, the best of 'em."

“Well, I wouldn’t think that, now, of that handsome young man, in the check shirt, that nodded to you as we passed him, while ago. He has an honest face.”

The girl again laughed and blushed. “Why then I’ll tell you,” she said, at length seduced into a confidence. “If I’d b’lieve any of ’em, I think it is that boy. He is a boatman on the Lakes, and airns a sighth o’ money, but it goes as fast as it comes.”

“How is that?”

“O then, he can’t help it, poor fellow. Them boatman ar’nt allowed to dhrink any thing while they’re upon the lake, except at the *stations*, but then, to make up for that, they all meet at night at a hall in town, where they stay dancing and dhrinking all night, ’till they spend whatever the quollity gives ’em in the day. Luke Kennedy, (that’s this boy,) would like to save, if he could, but the rest wouldn’t pull an oar with him, if he didn’t do as they

do. So that's the way of it. And sometimes afther being up all night a'most, you'll see 'em out again at the first light in the morning. 'Tis a pity the quollity would give 'em money at all, only have it laid out for 'em in some way that it would do 'em good. Luke Kennedy is a great fencer, ~~no~~ tould. Himself an' Myles Murphy, behind, ~~are~~ are the best about the lakes at the stick. Sure Luke taught fencing himself once. Did you ever hear o' the great guard he taught the boys about the place?"

Fame had not informed Eily of this circumstance.

"Well, I'll tell you it. He gev it out one Sunday, upon some writing that was pasted again the chapel door, to have all the boys, that wor for larnen to fence, to come to him at sech a place, an' he'd taich 'em a guard that would hindher 'em of ever being struck. Well, 'tis an admiration what a gathering he

had before him. So when they wor all listening, 'Boys' says he, 'getting up on a table an' looking round him, 'Boys, the guard I have to give ye, that 'll save ye from all sorts o' sthrokes' is this, to keep a civil tongue in ye'r head at all times. Do that,' says he, 'an' I'll be bail ye never 'll get a sthroke.' Well, you never seen people wondher so much, or look so foolish as they did, since the hour you wor born."

"'Twas a good advice."

"An' that's a thing Luke knew how to give, better than he'd take. I hardly spake to him at all now, myself.

"Why so?"

"Oh, he knows, himself. He wanted me a while ago to marry him, and to part my ould father."

"And you refused?" said Eily, blushing a conscious crimson.

"I hardly spoke to him afther. He'd be

the handsome Luke Kennedy, indeed, if he'd make me part the poor ould man that way. An' my mother dead, an' he having no else but myself to do a ha'p'orth for him. What could I expect if I done that? If Luke likes me, let him come and show it by my father, if not, there's more girls in the place, an' he's welcome to pick his choice, for Mary."

Every word of this speech fell, like a burning coal, upon the heart of Eily. She paused a moment in deep emotion, and then addressed her companion:

"You are right, Mary, you are very right. Let nothing, let no man's love, tempt you to forget your duty to your father. Oh, you do'nt know, much as you love him, what thoughts you would have, if you were to leave him as you say. Let nothing tempt you to it. You would neither have luck, nor peace, nor comfort, and if your husband should be unkind to you, you could not turn to him again for consolation. But I need

not be talking to you; you are a good girl, and more fit to give me advice, than to listen to any I can offer you."

From this moment Eily did not open her lips to her companion, until they arrived in Castle-Island. The Christmas Candles were already lighted in every cottage, and Eily determined to defer seeing her uncle until the following morning.

CHAPTER XXV.

HOW EILY FARED IN ~~HER~~ ~~EXP~~EDITION.

AFTER a sharp and frosty morning, the cold sun of the Christmas noon found Father Edward O'Connor seated in his little parlour, before a cheerful turf fire. A small table was laid before it, and decorated with a plain breakfast, which the fatigues of the forenoon rendered not a little acceptable. The sun shone directly in the window, dissolving slowly away the fantastic foliage of frost-work upon the window-panes, and flinging its shadow on the boarded

floor. The reverend host himself sat in a meditative posture, near the fire, awaiting the arrival of some fresh eggs, over the cookery of which, Jim, the clerk, presided in the kitchen. His head was drooped a little; his eyes fixed upon the burning fuel, his nether lip a little protruded, his feet stretched out and crossed, and the small bulky volume, in which he had been reading his daily office, half closed in his right hand, with a finger left between the leaves to mark the place. No longer a pale and secluded student, Father Edward now presented the appearance of a healthy man, with a face hardened by frequent exposure to the winds of midnight and of morn, and with a frame made firm and vigorous by unceasing exercise. His eye, moreover, had acquired a certain character of severity, which was more than qualified by a nature of the tenderest benevolence.

On the table, close to the small tray which held his simple equipage, was placed a

linen bag, containing in silver the amount of his Christmas offerings. They had been paid him on that morning, in crowns, half-crowns, and shillings, at the parish chapel. And Father Edward on this occasion had returned thanks to his parishioners for their liberality,—the half yearly compensation for all his toils and exertions, his sleepless nights and restless days, amounting to no less a sum than thirteen pounds, fourteen shillings.

“’Tis an admiration, sir,” said Jim, the clerk, as he entered, clad in a suit of Father Edward’s rusty black, laid the eggs upon the tray, and moved back to a decorous distance from the table. “’Tis an admiration what a sight o’ people is abroad in the kitchen, money hunting.”

“Did’nt I tell ’em the last time, that I never would pay a bill upon a Christmas day, again ?,”

“That’s the very thing I said to ’em, sir. But ’tis the answer they made me, that they

come a long distance, and 'twould cost 'em a day more if they were obliged to be coming again to-morrow."

Father Edward, with a countenance of perplexity and chagrin, removed the top of the egg, while he cast a glance alternately at the bag, and at his clerk. "It is a hard case, Jim," he said at last, "that they will not allow a man even the satisfaction of retaining so much money in his possession for a single day, and amusing himself by fancying it his own. I suspect I am doomed to be no more than a mere agent to this thirteen pound fourteen, after all; to receive and pay it away in a breath."

"Just what I was thinking myself, sir," said Jim, tossing his head.

"Well, I suppose, I must not cost the poor fellows a day's work; however, Jim, if they have come such a distance. That would be a little Pharisaical, I fear."

Jim did not understand this word, but he

bowed as if he would say, "Whatever your reverence says, I am sure, ~~must be~~ correct."

"Who are they, Jim?" resumed the clergyman.

"There's Luke Scanlon the shoe-maker, for your boots, sir; and Reardon the blacksmith for shoeing ~~the pony~~; and Miles-nacoppulleen as they call ~~him~~ for the price o' the little crathur; and the ~~printer~~ for your reverence's subscription to the Kerry Luminary; an' Rawley, the carpenter, for the repairs o' the althar, an—"

"Hut-tut! he must settle that with the parishioners. But the others, let me see. Shoeing myself, fifteen shillings; shoeing my pony thirteen, four sets; Well! the price of the 'little crathur,' as you say, seven pounds ten, (and she's well worth it) and lastly, the newspaper man two pounds."

"But not *lastly* entirely," said Jim, "for there's the tailor—"

"Sixteen and three pence. Jim, Jim, that will be a great reduction on the thirteen pound fourteen."

"Just what I was thinking of myself, sir," said the clerk.

"But I suppose they [▲]must have their money. Well, bring me in their bills, and let them all write a *settled* at the bottom."

Exit Jim.

"Here they are all, sir," he said, returning with a parcel of soiled and crumpled papers in his hand, "and Myles Murphy says that the agreement about the pony was seven pound ten an' a glass o' whiskey, an' that he never know a morning he'd sooner give your reverence a *reçate* for it, than a frosty one like this."

"Let him have it, Jim. That was an item, in the bargain, which had slipped my memory. And as you are giving it to him, take the bottle and treat them all round. They have a cold road before them."

“It’s what I thought-myself, sir,” said Jim.

Father Edward emptied the bag of silver and counted into several sums the amount of all the bills. When he had done so, he took in one hand the few shillings that remained, threw them into the empty bag, jingled them a little, smiled and tossed his head. Jim, the clerk, smiled and tossed his head in sympathy.

“It aiser emptied than filled, plase your reverence,” said Jim, with a short sigh.

“If it were not for the honour and dignity of it,” thought Father Edward, after his clerk had once more left the room, “my humble curacy at St. John’s were preferable to this extensive charge in so dreary a peopled wilderness. Quiet lodgings, a civil landlady, regular hours of discipline, and the society of my oldest friends; what was there in these that could be less desirable than a cold small house, on a mountain side, total seclusion from the company of my equals, and a fearful increase of

responsibility? Did the cause of preference lie in the distinction between the letters V. P. and P. P.; and the pleasure of paying away thirteen pounds fourteen shillings at Christmas? Oh, world! world! world! You are a great stage coach with fools for outside passengers; a huge round lump of earth, on the surface of which men seek for peace, but find it only when they sink beneath. Would I not give the whole thirteen pounds fourteen at this moment, to sit once more in my accustomed chair, in that small room, with the noise of the streets just dying away as the evening fell, and my poor little Eily reading to me from the window, as of old, as innocent, as happy, and as dutiful as then? Indeed I would, and more, if I had it. Poor Mihil! Ah, Eily, Eily! You deceived me! Well, well! Old Mihil says, I am too ready to preach patience to him. I must try and practise it myself."

At this moment the parlour door opened

again, and Jim once more thrust in his head.

“A girl, sir, that’s abroad, an’ would want to see you, if you please.”

“Who is she? What does she want? Confession, I suspect.”

“Just what I was thinking of myself, sir.”

“Oh, why didn’t she go to the chapel yesterday, where I was sitting until ten at night?”

“It’s the ~~very~~ thing I said to her myself, sir, and she had no answer to make, only wanting to see you.”

“Who is she? Don’t you know her, even by sight?”

“No, sir, in regard she keeps her head down, and her handkerchief to her mouth. I stooped to have a peep undernaith, but if I stooped low, she stooped lower, an’ left me just as wise as I was in the beginning.”

“Send her in,” said Father Edward, “I don’t like that secrecy.”

Jim went out, and presently returned, ushering in with many curious and distrustful glances, the young female of whom he had spoken. Father Edward desired her to take a chair, and then told the clerk to go out to the stable, and give the pony his afternoon feed. When the latter had left the room, he indulged in a preliminary examination of the person of his visitor. She was young, and well formed, and clothed in a blue cloak and bonnet, which were so disposed, as she sat, as to conceal altogether both her person and her features.

“Well, my good girl,” said the clergyman, in an encouraging tone, “what is your business with me?”

The young female remained for some moments silent, and her dress moved as if it were agitated by some strong emotion of the frame. At length rising from her seat, and tottering towards the astonished priest, she knelt down suddenly at his feet, and exclaimed while she

uncovered her face, with a burst of tears and sobbing, "Oh, Uncle Edward, don't you know me?"

Her uncle started from his chair. Astonishment, for some moments, held him silent and almost breathless. He, at last, stooped down, gazed intently on her face, raised her, placed her on a chair, where she remained quite passive, resumed his own seat, and covered his face, in silence, with his hand. Eily, more affected by this action than she might have been by the bitterest reproaches, continued to weep aloud with increasing violence.

"Don't cry, do not afflict yourself," said Father Edward, in a quiet, yet cold tone, "there can be no use in that. The Lord forgive you, child! Don't cry. Ah, Eily O'Connor! I never thought it would be our fate to meet in this manner."

"I hope you will forgive me, uncle," sobbed the poor girl, "I did it for the best, indeed."

"Did it for the best!" said the clergyman

looking on her for the first time with some sternness. "Now Eily, you will vex me, if you say that again. I was in hopes that, lost as you are, you came to me, nevertheless, in penitence and in humility, at least, which was the only consolation your friends could ever look for. But the first word I hear from you is an excuse, a justification of your crime. Did it for the best? Don't you remember, Eily, having ever read in that book that I was accustomed to explain to you in old times, don't you remember that the excuses of Saul made his repentance unaccepted?—and will you imitate his example? You did it for the best, after all! I won't speak of my own sufferings, since this unhappy affair, but there is your old father, (I am sorry to hurt your feelings, but it is my duty to make you know the extent of your guilt,) your old father has not enjoyed one moment's rest ever since you left him. He was here with me a week since, for the second

time after your departure, and I never was more shocked in all my life. You cry, but you would cry more bitterly if you saw him. When I knew you together, he was a good father to you, and a happy father too. He is now a frightful skeleton!—Was that done for the best, Eily?”

“Oh, no, no, sir, I did not mean to say that I acted right, or even from a right intention. I only meant to say, that it was not quite so bad as it might appear.”

“To judge by your own appearance, Eily,” her uncle continued, in a compassionate tone, “one would say, that its effects have not been productive of much happiness on either side. Turn to the light; you are very thin and pale. Poor child! poor child! oh, why did you do this? What could have tempted you to throw away your health, your duty, to destroy your father’s peace of mind, and your own honest reputation all in a day?”

“Uncle,” said Eily, “there is one point on which I fear you have made a wrong conclusion. I have been, I know, sir, very ungrateful to you, and to my father, and very guilty in the sight of heaven, but I am not quite so abandoned a creature as you seem to believe me. Disobedience, sir,” she added with a blush of the deepest crimson, “is the very worst offence of which I can accuse myself.”

“What!” exclaimed Father Edward, while his eyes lit up with sudden pleasure, “Are you then married?”

“I was married, sir, a month before I left my father.”

The good clergyman seemed to be more deeply moved by this intelligence than by any thing which had yet occurred in the scene. He winked repeatedly with his eyelids, in order to clear away the moisture which began to overspread the balls, but it would not do. The

fountain had been unlocked, it gushed forth in a flood, too copious to be restrained, and he gave up the contest. He reached his hand to Eily, grasped hers, and shook it fervently, and long, while he said, in a voice that was made hoarse and broken by emotion:—

“ Well, well, Eily, that’s a great deal. ’Tis not every thing, but it is a great deal. The general supposition was that the cause of secrecy could be no other than a shameful one. I am very glad of this, Eily. This will be some comfort to your father.” He again pressed her hand, and shook it kindly, while Eily wept upon his own, like an infant.

“ And where do you stay, now, Eily? Where—who is your husband?”

Eily appeared distressed at this question, and, after some embarrassment, said:—“ My dear uncle, I am not at liberty to answer you those questions, at present. My husband does not know of my having even taken

this step ;—and I dare not think of telling what he commanded that I should keep secret.”

“ Secrecy, still, Eily ? ” said the clergyman, rising from his seat and walking up and down the room with his hands behind his back, and a severe expression returning to his eye—
“ I say again, I do not like this affair. Why should your husband affect this deep concealment ? Is he poor ? Your father will rejoice to find it no worse. Is he afraid of the resentment of your friends ? Let him bring back our own Eily, and he will be received with arms as open as charity. What, besides conscious guilt, can make him thus desirous of concealment ? ”

“ I cannot tell you his reasons, uncle,” said Eily, timidly, “ but indeed he is nothing of what you say.”

“ Well, and how do you live, then, Eily ? With his friends, or how ? If you will

not tell where, you may at least tell how."

"It is not, *will not*, with me, indeed, uncle Edward, but *dare not*. My first act of disobedience cost me dearly enough, and I dare not attempt a second."

"Well, well," replied her uncle, a little annoyed, "you have more logic than I thought you had. I must not press you farther on that head. But how do you live? Where do you hear mass on Sundays? Or do you hear it regularly at all?"

Eily's drooping head and long silence gave answer in the negative.

"Do you go to mass every Sunday at least? You used to hear it every day, and a blessing fell on you, and on your house, while you did so. Do you attend it now on Sunday itself?"

Eily continued silent.

"Did you hear mass a single Sunday at

all since you left home?" he asked in increasing amazement.

Eily answered in a whisper between her teeth—"Not one."

The good Religious lifted up his hands to heaven, and then suffered them to fall motionless by his side. "Oh, you poor child!" he exclaimed, "May the Lord forgive you your sins! It is no wonder that you should be ashamed, and afraid, and silent."

A pause of some moments now ensued, which was eventually broken by the Clergyman.

"And what was your object in coming then, if you had it not in your power to tell me any thing that could enable me to be of some assistance to you?"

"I came, sir," said Eily, "in the hope that you would, in a kinder manner than any body else, let my father know all that I have told you, and inform him, moreover, that I

hope it will not be long before I am allowed to ask his pardon, with my own lips, for all the sorrow that I have caused him. I was afraid, if I had asked my husband's permission to make this journey, it might have been refused. I will now return, and persuade him if I can, to come here with me again this week."

Father Edward again paused for a considerable time, and eventually addressed his niece with a deep seriousness of voice and manner. "Eily," he said, "a strong light has broken in upon me respecting your situation. I fear this man, in whom you trust so much and so generously, and to whose will you show so perfect an obedience, is not a person fit to be trusted, nor obeyed. You are married, I think, to one who is not proud of his wife. Stay with me, Eily, I advise—I warn you. It appears by your own words that this man is already a tyrant, he loves

you not, and from being despotic, he may grow dangerous. Remain with me, and write him a letter. I do not judge the man. I speak only from general probabilities, and these would suggest the great wisdom of your acting as I say."

"I dare not, I could not, would not, do so," said Eily. "You never were more mistaken in any body's character than in his of whom you are speaking. If I did not fear, I love him far too well to treat him with so little confidence. When next we meet, uncle, you shall know the utmost of my apprehensions. At present, I can say no more. And the time is passing too," she continued, looking at the sunshine which traversed the little room, with a ray more faint and more oblique. "I am pledged to return this evening. Well, my dear uncle, good bye! I hope to bring you back a better niece than you are parting now. Trust all to me for three or four days more,

and Eily never will have a secret again from her uncle, nor her father."

"Good bye, child, good bye, Eily," said the clergyman much affected. "Stay—Stay!" he exclaimed, as a sudden thought entered his head. "Come here, Eily, an instant." He took up the linen bag before mentioned and shook out into his hand the remaining silver of his dues. "Eily," said he with a smile "it is a long time since Uncle Edward gave you a Christmas-box. Here is one for you. Open your hand, now, if you do not wish to offend me. Good bye! Good bye, my poor, darling child!" He kissed her cheek, and then, as if reproaching himself for an excess of leniency, he added in a more stern accent. "I hope, Eily, that this may be the last time I shall have to part from my niece, without being able to tell her name."

Eily had no other answer than her tears, which, in most instances, were the most persuasive arguments she could employ.

“ She is an affectionate creature, after all,” said Father Edward, when his niece had left the house—“ a simple, affectionate little creature, but I was in the right to be severe with her,” he added, giving himself credit for more than he deserved, “ her conduct called for some severity, and I was in the right to exercise it as I did.”

So saying, he returned to his chair by the fire-side, and resumed the reading of his interrupted Office.

CHAPTER XXVI.

HOW HARDRESS CONSOLED HIMSELF DURING HIS SEPARATION FROM EILY.

DANNY, the Lord, did not, as Eily was tempted to fear, neglect the delivery of her letter to Hardress. Night had surprised him on his way to Mr. Cregan's cottage. A bright crescent shed its light over the lofty Toomies, and flung his own stunted shadow on the lime-stone road, as he trudged along, breathing now and then on his cold fingers, and singing :—

“ Oh, did you not hear of Kate Kearney ?
Who lives on de Banks of Killarney,
From the glance of her eye,
Shun danger and fly,
For fatal's de glance of Kate Kearney.”

He had turned in upon the road which led to Aghadoe, and beheld at a short distance the ruined church, and the broken grave-stones which were scattered around its base. Danny, with the caution which he had learned from his infancy, suppressed his unhallowed song as he approached this mournful retreat, and stepped along with a softer pace, in order to avoid attracting the attention of any spiritual loiterers in his neighbourhood. The grave of poor Dalton, the huntsman, was amongst the many which he beheld, and Danny knew that it was generally reported, amongst the peasantry, that his ghost had been frequently seen in the act of exercising, after death, that vocation to which, during life, he had been so ardently attached. Danny, who

had no ambition to become a subject for the view-halloo to his sporting acquaintance, kept on the shady side of the road, in the hope that by this means he might be enabled to "stale by, unknownst."

Suddenly, the night wind, which hurried after, bore to his ear the sound of several voices, which imitated the yelling of hounds in chase and the fox-hunters' cry. Danny started aghast with terror, a heavy and turbid sensation pressed upon his nerves, and all his limbs grew damp. He crossed himself, and drew close to the dry-stone wall which bounded the road side.

"Hoicks! Come!—Come!—Come away! Come away! Hoicks!" was shouted at the top of a voice that, one might easily judge, had sounded the death-knell of many a wily reynard. The cry was caught up and echoed at various distances by three less practised voices. The ringing of horses' hoofs against the hard

and frosty road, was the next sound that encountered the ear of the little Lord. It approached rapidly nearer, and grew too sharp and hard to suppose that it could be occasioned by any concussion of immaterial substances. It proved, indeed, to be a danger of a more positive and actual kind. Our traveller perceived, in a few minutes, that the noise proceeded from three drunken gentlemen who were returning from a neighbouring debauch, and urging their horses forward to the summit of their speed, with shouts and gestures which gave them the appearance of demoniacs.

The foremost, perceiving Danny Mann, pulled up his horse, with a violent check, and the others, as they approached, imitated his example. The animals (who were worthy of kinder masters) appeared to participate in the intoxication of their riders. Their eyes flared, their mouths were hid in foam, and they snorted in impatient scorn of the delay to which they were subjected.

“Tally!” cried the first who gallopped up.
“Ware bailiff! Who are you?”

“A poor man, sir, dat’s going de road to—”

“Hoicks! A bailiff! Come, come away! Do’nt I know you, you limb of mischief? Give me out your processes, or I’ll beat you into a jelly. Kneel down there, on the road, until I ride over you!”

“Dat de hands may stick to me, sir, if I have a process in de world.”

“Kneel down, I say!” repeated the drunken horseman, shaking his whip loose, and applying it, several times, with all his might, to the shoulders of the recusant. “Lie down on the road, until I ride over you ~~and~~ trample your infernal brains out!”

“Pink him! Sweat him! Pink the rascal!” cried another horseman, riding rapidly up, and flourishing a naked sword. “Put up your whip, Connolly, out with your sword, man, and let us pink the scoundrel.”

"Do as Creagh bids you, Connolly," exclaimed a third, who was as drunk again as the other two. "Out with your blade and pi—pink the ras—rascal."

There was nothing for it but a run, and Danny took to his heels like a fawn. This measure, however, gave a new zest to the sport. The gentlemen galloped after him, with loud shouts of "Hoicks!" and "Tally!" and overtook him at a part of the road which was enclosed by hedges, too close and high to admit of any escape into the fields. Knowing well the inhuman desperation with which the gentlemen of the day were accustomed to follow up freaks of this kind, Danny felt his heart sink as low as if he had been pursued by a rooted enemy. While he glanced in terror from one side to another, and saw himself cut off from all chance of safety, he received a blow on the head from the loaded handle of a whip, which stunned, staggered, and finally laid him prostrate on the earth.

“ I have him ! ” shouted his pursuer. “ Here he is, as cool as charity. I’ll trample the rascal’s brains out ! ”

So saying, he reined up his horse, and endeavoured, by every species of threat and entreaty, to make the chafed and fiery steed set down his iron hoof upon the body of the prostrate Lord. But the animal, true to that noble instinct which distinguishes the more generous individuals of his species, refused to fall in with the bloody humour of his rider. He set his feet apart, demi-volted to either side, and would not, by any persuasion or sleight of horsemanship, be prevailed upon to injure the fallen man.

Danny, recovering from the stunning effects of the blow, and perceiving the gentlemen hemming him round with their swords, now sought, in an appeal to their mercies, that security which he could not obtain by flight. He knelt before them, lifted up his hands, and implored com-

passion in accents which would have been irresistible by any but drunken gentlemen on a *pinking* frolic. But his cries were drowned in the savage shouts of his beleaguers. Their swords gathered round him in a fearful circle, and Creagh commenced operations by a thrust in the arm, which left a gash of nearly half an inch in depth. His companions, who did not possess the same dexterity in the exercise of the weapon, and were nevertheless equally free of its use, thrust so frequently, and with so much awkwardness, that the unfortunate deformed ran a considerable risk of losing his life. He had already received several gashes in the face and limbs, and was growing faint with pain and anxiety, when the voice of a fourth horseman was heard at a little distance, and young Hardress Cregan, as little self-possessed as the rest, galloped into the group. He drew his small sword, flourished it in the moonlight with a fierce halloo! ~~that was~~ echoed far away

among the lakes and mountains, and prepared to join in the fun. But one glance was sufficient to enable him to recognize his servant.

“Connolly, hold ! Hold off, Creagh ! Hold, or I’ll stab you !” he cried aloud while he struck up their swords with passion, “How dared you set upon my servant ? You are both drunk ! go home or I’ll hash you !”

“Drunk !” said his father, “pup—Puppy ! wha—what do you call d—d—drunk ? D—d—d’you say I’m drunk ? Eh ?” And he endeavoured, but without much success, to assume a steady and dignified posture in his saddle.

“No sir,” said Hardress, who merited his own censure as richly as any one present, “But—a—th—these two gentlemen are.”

“D’ye hear that, Creagh ?” said Connolly, “Come along and show him if we’re

drunk. Look here, Mister Slender-limbs !
Do you see that road ? ”

“ I—I do,” said Hardress, who might have conscientiously sworn to the seeing more than one.

“ And do you—(look here !)—do you see this horse ? ”

“ I do,” said Hardress, with some gravity of deliberation.

“ And do you see *me* ? ” shouted the querist,

And raised upon his desperate foot
On stirrup-side, he gazed about.”

“ Ve—very—well ! You see that road, and you see my horse, and you see me ! Ve—very well. Now could a drunken man do this ? Yo—hoicks ! Come ! come ! come away ! hoicks ! ” And, so saying, he drove the rowels into his horse’s flank, stooped

forward on his seat and galloped away with a speed that made the night air whistle by his ears. He was followed, at an emulative rate, by Hyland Creagh and the elder Cregan.

Hardress now assisted the afflicted Danny to mount behind him, and putting spurs to his horse, rode after his companions, at a pace but little inferior, in point of speed, to that which they had used.

Arrived at the cottage, he bade Danny follow him into the drawing room, where there was a cheerful fire. The other gentlemen, in the mean time, had possessed themselves of the dining parlour, and were singing in astounding chorus the melody which begins with this verse :

“ Come ! each jolly fellow
That loves to be mellow,
Attend unto me and sit easy;
One jorum in quiet,
My boys we will try it,
Dull thinking will make a man crazy.”

The ladies, who had spent the evening out were not yet returned, and Hardress, much against the will of the affrighted boatman, insisted upon Danny's taking his seat, before the fire, in Mrs. Cregan's arm-chair.

"Sit down there!" he exclaimed, with violence, seizing him by the collar, and forcing him into the seat. "Know, fellow, that if I bid you sit on a throne you are fit to fill it! — You are a king, Danny!" he added, standing unsteadily before his servant, with one hand thrust between his ample shirt frills and the other extended in an oratorical attitude, "you are a king, in heart, though not in birth. But, tush! as Sterne says—Are we not all relations? Look at this hand! I admire you, Danny Mann! I respect—I venerate you—I think you a respectable person, in your class, respectable in your class, and what more could be expected from a king?—I admire—I love you, Danny! —You are a king in heart, though not," he re-

peated, lowering the tone of his eulogy while he fixed his half-closed eyes upon the deplorable figure of the little Lord, "though not in appearance."

Any body, who could contemplate Danny's person, at this moment, might have boldly joined in the assertion that he was not "a king, in appearance." The poor little hunch-back sat forward in the chair, in a crouching attitude, half terrified; and abashed by the finery with which he was surrounded. His joints were stiffening from the cold, his dress sparkling with a hoar frost, and his face of a wretched white wherever it was not discoloured by the clotted blood. At every noise he half started from his seat with the exclamation, "Tunder alive! its de missiz!"

"Nancy!" Hardress said, addressing the old woman who came to answer the bell. "Nancy, draw that table near the fire, there, and slip into the ~~chair~~ ~~chair~~, do you hear?"

and bring me here the whiskey, a jug of hot water, a bowl, two glasses, and a lemon—Don't say a word to the gentlemen—I'll take a quiet glass here in comfort with Danny—”

“ With Danny ! ” exclaimed the old woman, throwing up her hands.

“ Oh, dat I might'nt sin, master, if I daare do it ! ” said Danny, springing out of the chair. “ I'll be kilt be de missiz.”

“ Stay where you are ! ” said Hardress, “ and you, woman ! do as you're bid ! ”

He was obeyed. The Lord, in vain ennobled, returned to his seat ; and the bewildered Nancy laid on the table the materials in demand.

“ Danny,” said Hardress, filling out a brimming glass to his dependant, “ when the winds of autumn raved, and the noble Shannon ruffled his grey pate against the morning sun, when the porpoise rolled his black bulk amid the spray and foam, and the shrouds sung

sharp against the cutting breeze—do you understand me?”

“Iss, partly sir.”

“In those moments, then, of high excitement and of triumph, with that zest which danger gives to enjoyment, when every cloud that darkened on the horizon sent forth an additional blast, a fresh trumpeter amongst the Tritons to herald our destruction; when our best hope was in our own stout hands, and our dearest consolation that of the Trojan leader—

Hæc olim meminisse juvabit !

Do you understand that?”

“It’s Latin, sir, I’m thinking.”

“*Probatum est !* When the struggle grew so close between our own stout little vessel and her invisible aerial foe, as to approach the climax of contention, the point of contact between things irresistible, and things immove-

able, the ‘Ἡ με ἀνὰ τὴν ἡ ἐγὼ σε — Do you understand?’”

“More Latin, sir?”

“That’s Greek, you goose.”

“It’s all Greek to me,” said Danny.

“But in those moments, my *fidus Achates*, you often joined me in a simple aquatic meal, and why not now? This is my conclusion. Why not now? *Major*—We used to eat together—*minor*—We wish to drink together—*conclusion*—We ought to drink together.” And following up, in act, a conclusion so perfectly rational, the collegian, (who was only pedantic in his maudlin hours) hurried swiftly out of sight the contents of his own lofty glass.

Danny timidly imitated his example, at the same time drawing from inside the lining of his hat, the letter of the unhappy Eily. Intoxicated as he was, the sight of this well-known hand produced a strong effect upon her principled husband. His eye-lid quivered, his

hand trembled, and a black expression swept across his face. He thrust the letter, opened, but still unread, into his waistcoat pocket, refilled his glass, and called on Danny for a song.

“ A song, Master Hardess ! Oh, dat I may be happy, if I'd raise my voice in dis room for all Europe ! ”

“ Sit in that chair, and sing ! ” exclaimed Hardess, clenching his hand, and extending it towards the recusant, “ or I'll pin you to that door ! ”

Thus enforced, the rueful Danny returned to the chair which he had once more deserted, and after clearing his throat by a fresh appeal to the glass, he sang a little melody which may yet be heard at evening in the western villages. Hardess was enchanted with the air, the words, and the style of the singer. He made Danny repeat it, until he became hoarse, and assisted to bear the burthen him-

self with more of noise than good taste or correctness. The little Lord, as he dived deeper into the bowl, began to lose his self-restraint, and to forget the novelty of his situation. He rivalled his master in noise and volubility, and no longer showed the least reluctance or timidity when commanded to chaunt out the favourite lay for the seventh time, at least :

I.

' My mamma she bought me a camlet coat-gown,
Made in de fashion, wit de tail of it down,
A dimity petticoat whiter dan chalk,
An' a pair o' bow slippers to help me to walk.
An' its Oro wisha, Dan'el asthore !

II.

I've a nice little dog to bark at my doore,
A nate little besom to sweep up de floore,
Every ting else dat is fit for good use,
Two ducks and a gander, besides an old goose.
An' its Oro wisha, Dan'el asthore."

“Well, why do you stop? What do you stare at?” Hardress asked, perceiving the vocalist suddenly lower his voice, and slinge away from the table, while his eyes were fixed on the farther end of the room. The collegian looked in the same direction, and beheld the figure of a young female, in a ball dress of unusual splendour, standing as if fixed in astonishment. Her black hair, which was decorated with one small sprig of pearls, hung loose around her head, a necklace of the same costly material rested on her bosom, and was, in part, concealed by the bright coloured silk kerchief which was drawn around her shoulders. On one arm she held the fur-trimmed cloak and heavy shawl which she had just removed from her person, and which were indicative of a recent exposure to the frosty air. Indeed, nothing but the uproarious mirth of the ill-assorted revellers, could have prevented their hearing the wheels of the carriage as they grated

along the gravel-plat before the hall door. This venerable vehicle was sent to set the ladies down by the positive desire of their hostess, and Mrs. Cregan accepted it in preference to her open curricle, although she knew that a more crazy and precarious mode of conveyance could not be found, even among the ships marked with the very last letter on Lloyd's list.

Recognizing his cousin, Hardress endeavoured to assume towards Danny Mann, an air of dignified condescension and maudlin majesty, which formed a ludicrous contrast to the convivial freedom of his manner a few moments before.

"Very well, my man," he said, liquifying the consonants in every word. "Go out now, go to the kitchen, and I'll hear the remainder of your story in the morning."

Danny fell cunningly into the deception of his master, to whom he now evinced a profundity

of respect, as if to banish the idea of equality, which the foregoing scene might have suggested.

“Iss, plase your honour!” he said, bowing repeatedly down to his knees, and brushing his hat back, until it swept the floor, “long life and glory to your honour, master Hardress, an’ tis I dat would be lost, if it was’nt for your goodness. Oh, murder, murder!” he added, to himself, as he scoured out of the room, describing a wide circuit to avoid Miss Chute, “I’ll be fairly flayed alive on de ’count of it.”

“Well, Anne?” said Hardress, rising and moving towards her with some unsteadiness of gait. “I—I’m glad to see you, Anne, we’re just come home : very pleasant night, pleasant fellows, very, very pleasant fellows, some capital songs, I was wishing for you, Anne. Had you a pleasant night where you were? Who—who did you dance with? Come, Anne, we’ll dance a minuet—min—minuet de la cour.”

“Excuse me,” said Anne, coldly, as she

turned towards the door, "not at this hour, certainly."

"A fig for the hour, Anne. Hours were made for slaves. Anne, oh, Anne! You look beautiful—beautiful to-night! Oh, Anne! Time flies, youth fades, and age, with slow and withering pace, comes on, before we hear his footfall!" Here he sang in a loud, but broken voice—

"Then follow, follow,
Follow, follow,
Follow, follow pleasure!
There's no drinking in the grave!"

"Oh, Anne! that's as true as if the Stagyrite had penned it. Worms, Anne, worms and silence! Come, one minuet! Lay by your cloak—

"And follow, follow,
Follow, follow,
Follow, follow pleasure!
There's no *dancing* in the grave!"

“Let me pass, if you please,” said Miss Chute, still cold and lofty, while she endeavoured to get to the door.

“Not awhile, Anne,” replied Hardress, catching her hand.

“Stand back, sir!” exclaimed the offended girl, drawing up her person into the attitude of a Minerva, while her forehead glowed, and her eye flashed with indignation. “If you forget yourself, do not suppose that I am inclined to commit the same oversight.” Saying this, she walked out of the room, with the air of an offended princess, leaving Hardress a little struck and sobered by the sudden change in her manner.

Lifting up his eyes, after a pause of some moments, he beheld his mother standing near, and looking on him with an eye in which the loftiness of maternal rebuke was mingled with an expression of sneering and satirical reproach.

"You are a wise young gentleman," she said, "you have done well. Fool that you are, you have destroyed yourself." Without bestowing another word upon him, Mrs. Cregan took one of the candles in her hand, and left the room.

Hardress had sufficient recollection to follow her example. He took the other light, and endeavoured, but with many errors, to navigate his way towards the door. "Destroyed myself!" he said, as he proceeded, "Why where's the mighty harm of taking a cheerful glass on a winter's night with a friend? A friend, Hardress? Yes, a friend, but what friend? Danny Mann, alias Danny the Lord, my boatman. It won't do! (shaking his head.) It sounds badly. I'm afraid I did something to offend Anne Chute. I'm sorry for it, because I respect her; I respect you, Anne, in my very, very heart. But I'm ill used, and I ought to have satisfaction; Creagh has pinked my boat-

man. I'll send him a message, that's clear; I'll not be hiring boatmen for him to be pinking for his amusement. Let him pink their master if he can. That's the chat! (snapping his fingers,) Danny Mann costs me twelve pounds a year, besides his feeding and clothing, and I'll not have him pinked by old Hyland Creagh, afterwards. Pink me, if he can: let him leave my boatman alone! That's the chat! This floor goes starboard and larboard, up and down, like the poop of a ship; up and—Hallo! Who are you? oh, its ~~only~~ the door. I have broke my nose against it. And if I break my own nose without any reason at this time o' day, what usage can I expect from Creagh, or any body else?"

Having arrived at this wise conclusion, he sallied out of the room, rubbing with one hand the bridge of the afflicted feature, and elevating, in the other, the light, which he still held with a most retentive grasp. As the long and narrow

hall, which lay between him and his bed-chamber formed a direct rail-road way, which it was impossible even for a drunken man to miss, he reached the little dormitory without farther accident. The other gentlemen had been already borne away unresisting from the parlour, and transmitted from the arms of Mike to those of Morpheus.

CHAPTER XVII.

HOW HARDRESS ANSWERED THE LETTER OF EILY.

“ You have destroyed yourself ! ” Mrs. Cregan repeated, on the following morning, as she sat in the breakfast parlour, in angry communion with our collegian. “ If you have any desire to redeem even a portion of her forfeited esteem, now is your time. She is sitting alone in the drawing room, and I have prevailed on her to see you for a few moments. She returns in two or three days to Castle-Chute, where she is to Christmas,

and unless you are able to make your peace before her departure, I know not how long the war may last."

"Yes," said Hardress, with a look of deep anguish, "I shall go* and meet her on the spot where I dared to insult her! Insult Anne Chute? Why, if my brain had turned, if lunacy, instead of drunkenness, had set a blind upon my reason at the time, I thought my heart at least would have directed me.—Mother, don't ask me to see her there, I could tear my very flesh for anger; I never will forgive myself, and how then can I seek forgiveness from her?"

"Go——go!—That speech might have done much for you, if it had been properly addressed—Go to her."

"I will!" said Hardress, setting his teeth, and rising with a look of forced resolution, "I know that it is merely a courting of ruin, a hastening and confirming of my own

black destiny, and yet I will go seek her. I cannot describe to you the sensation that attracts my feet at this moment in the direction of the drawing room. There is a demon leading, and a demon driving me on, and I know them well and plainly, and yet I will not choose but go—The way is torture, and the end is hell, and I know it, and I go! And there is one sweet spirit, one trembling, pitying angel that waves me back with its pale, fair hands, and strives to frown in its kindness, and points that way to the hills! Mother! mother! the day may come when you will wish a burning brand had seared those lips athwart before they said—
‘Go to her!’”

“What do you mean?” said Mrs. Cregan, with some indignant surprize.

“Well, well, am I not going? Do I not say I go?” continued Hardress, “Is it not enough if I comply? May I not talk? May

I not rant a little? My heart will burst if I do these things in silence."

"Come Hardress, you are far too sensitive a lover—"

"A *what*?" cried Hardress, springing to his feet, and with a fierceness of tone and look that made his mother start.

"Pooh, pooh! A cousin, then, a good, kind cousin, but too sensitive."

"Yes—yes"—muttered Hardress, "I am not yet damned. The sentence is 'above my head, but it is not 'spoken; the scarlet sin is willed, but not recorded.—Mother, have patience with me! I will not, I cannot, I dare see Anne Chute this morning." And he again sunk into his chair.

Mrs. Cregan, who attributed all those manifestations of reluctance, and remorse, (which her son had evinced during their frequent interviews) to the recollection of some broken promise, or boyish faith

forsaken, was now surprized at their intensity.

“ My dear Hardress ! “ she said, laying her hand affectionately on his shoulder—“ my darling child, you afflict yourself too honestly. Say what you will, there are few natures nursed in an Irish cabin that are capable of suffering so keenly to the endurance of any disappointment as you do to the inflicting it.”

“ Do you think so, mother ? ”

“ Be assured of it. And again—why do you vex your mind about this interview ? Is it not a simple matter for a gentleman to apologize politely to a lady for an unintentional affront ? If you have hurt your cousin’s feelings, what crime can accompany or follow a plain and gentlemanly apology ? ”

“ That’s true, that’s very true,” said Hardress. “ There is a call upon me, and

I will obey it. But politely? Politely? If I could stop at that. It is impossible, I shall first become a fool, and, by and by, a demon. But you are right, and I obey you, mother."

So saying, he walked with a kind of desperate calmness out of the room, and Mrs. Cregan heard him continue the same heavy, self-abandoned step along the hall which led to the drawing-room door.

Nothing could have been more propitiatory than the air of mournful tranquillity with which the young collegian entered the room in which his cousin was expecting him. It might resemble that of a believing mussulman, who prepared to encounter a predestined sorrow. He observed, and his pulse quickened at the sight. His cousin's eyes were marked with a slight tinge of red as if she had been weeping. She rose as he entered, and lowered her head and her person

in rather distant courtesy, a coldness which she repented the moment her eye rested on his pale and anxious countenance.

"You see how totally all shame has left me," said Hardress, forcing a smile, "I do not even hide myself. Will my apology, Anne, be admissible after last night?"

Miss Clute hesitated and appeared slightly confused. She did not, she said, for her own sake, look for any. But, it would indeed give her pleasure; ~~that~~ that might explain the extraordinary scene on which she had intruded.

"You are ashamed," said Hardress, "to find that I could make myself so much a beast! But intoxication is not always a voluntary sin, with people who sit down after dinner with such men as Creagh and Connor, ~~and~~——" he did not add, "my father."

"But when you were aware——"

"And when I was, and as I was, Anne, I

rose and left the table ; I, and young Geoghegan, but they all got up, to a man, and shut out the door, and swore we should not stir. They went so far as to draw their swords. Upon my honour, I do not think we could have left the room last night, sober, without bloodshed. And was it so unpardonable then? Cato, himself, you know, was once found drunk."

"Yes, *once*."

"I don't think that's deserved," said Har-
dress, colouring slightly, "I may have often tres-
passed a little in ~~that way~~, but I never, till last
night, became as drunk as Cato. Nor even
last night, for I was able to ride home at a
canter, to rescue my poor hunch-back out of a
dilemma, and to bring him hither on my saddle,
whereas Cato was unable to keep his own legs,
you know."

"I heard that circumstance this morning,
and I admit that it altered the posture of the
transaction very considerably. But did those

gentlemen who drew their swords upon you, make you promise to continue drinking after your return, and to bring Danny into the drawing-room to join you ?”

“And to insult my cousin ?” added Hardress, “No, there my guilt begins, and unless your mercy steps in to my relief, I must bear the burthen unassisted.”

“To tell you the truth, Hardress,” said Anne, assuming an air of greater frankness, “it is not the offence or insult (as you term it) of last night alone, that perplexes and afflicts me. Your whole manner, for a long time past, is one continued enigma, one distressing series of misconceptions on my part, and of inconsistencies, I will say nothing harder, upon yours. Your whole conduct has changed since I have met you here, and changed by no means favourably. I cannot understand you. I appear to give you pain most frequently when it is farthest from my

own intention, and I cannot tell you how distressed I feel upon the subject."

Haidress fixed his eyes upon her while she spoke, and remained for some moments wrapt in silent and intoxicating admiration. When she had concluded, and while a gentle anxiety still shadowed her features with an additional depth of interest, he approached to her side, and said :

"And is it possible, Anne, that the conduct of so worthless a fellow as I am should in any way affect you so deeply as you describe? Believe me, Anne, I do not mouth, nor rave, while I declare to you, that I had rather lie down and die here at your feet, than give you a moment's painful thought, or secure regard your feelings."

"Oh, sir," said Anne, looking more offended than usual, "I cannot sit here in your language again repeated. You must remember how painfully these conversations have always terminated."

The intoxication of passion is no less absorbing and absolute, than that which arises out of a coarser sensual indulgence. Hardress was no more capable of thought or of reflection now, than he was during the excesses of the foregoing night. He yielded himself slowly, but surely, to the growing delirium, and became forgetful of every thing but the unspeakable happiness that seemed to thrust itself upon him.

"Anne," he said, with great anxiety of voice and manner, "let that, ~~and~~ be made a subject for your forgiveness. Shall I tell you a secret? Shall I give you the key to all those perplexing inconsistencies, the solution to that long enigma of which you ~~are~~ explained? I can no more contain it than I could arrest a torrent. I love you! Does that explain it? If you are satisfied, do not conceal ~~your feelings~~. Say it kindly, say it generously! I do not ask you to say any thing that can even make you blush. If you are not displeased, say only that you forgive me, and

that word will be the token of my happiness."

He paused, and Anne Chute, turning away her head, and reaching him her hand, said in a low, but distinct tone, "Hardress, I am satisfied, I do forgive you."

Hardress sunk at her feet, and bathed with his tears the hand which had been surrendered to him.

"One moment! one moment's patience, my kindest, my sweetest Anne!" he said, as a sudden thought started into his mind. "I wish to send one line to my mother, is it your pleasure? She is in the next room, and I wish to——Ha!"

A sudden alteration took place in his appearance. While he spoke of writing, he had taken from his waistcoat pocket a pencil and an open letter, from which he tore away a portion of the back. The handwriting arrested his attention, and he looked within. The first words that met his eye were the following:

“ If Eily has done any thing to offend you, come and tell her so ; but remember she is now away from every friend in the whole world. Even if you are still in the same mind as when you left me, come, at all events, for once, and let me go back to my father.”

While his eyes wandered over this letter, his figure underwent an alteration that filled the heart of Anne with terror. The apparition of the murdered Banquo, at the festival, could not have shot a fiercer remembrance into the soul of his slayer, than did those simple lines into the heart of Hardress. He held the paper before him at arm's length, his cheek grew white, his forehead grew damp, and the sinews of his limbs grew faint and quivering with fear. His uneasiness was increased by his total ignorance of the manner in which the letter came into his possession.

“ Hardress ! What is the matter ? What is it you tremble at ? ” said Anne, in great uneasiness.

"I do not know, Anne. I think there's witch-craft here. I am doomed, I think, to live a charmed life. I never yet imagined that I was on the threshold of happiness; but some wild hurry, some darkening change, swept across the prospect, and made it all a dream. It has been always so, in my least, as in my highest, hopes. I think it is my doom. Even now, I thought I had already entered upon its free enjoyment, and behold, yourself, how swiftly it has vanished!"

"Vanished!"

"Aye vanished, and for ever! Were we not now almost one soul and being? Did we not mingle sighs? Did we not mingle tears? Was not your hand in mine, and did I not think I felt our spirits united together in an inseparable league? And now, (be witness for me against my destiny) how suddenly we have been wrenched asunder! how soon a gulf has opened under our feet, to separate our hearts and fortunes from henceforth and for ever!"

“For ever!” echoed Anne, lost in perplexity and astonishment.

“Forgive me!” Hardress continued in a dreary tone. “I did but mock you, Anne, I cannot, must not love you! I am called away; I was mad, and dreamed a lunatic’s dream, but a horrid voice has woken me up, and warned me to begone. I never can be the happy one I hoped, Anne Chute’s accepted lover.”

“Yet once again, sir!” exclaimed Miss Chute, with a burst of natural indignation. “Once more must I endure those insults? Do you think me made of marble! Do you think,” she continued, panting heavily, “that you can sport with my feelings at your plea-

“I can only say, forgive me!”

“I do not think you value my forgiveness. I have been always too ready to accord it, and that I think has subjected me to additional insult. Oh, Mrs. Cregan!” she added, as she

saw that lady enter the room, and close the door carefully behind her. Oh, Mrs. Cregan, why did you bring me to this house?"

With these words she ran, as if for refuge, to the arms of her aunt, and fell in a fit of hysterical weeping upon her neck.

"What is the matter?" said Mrs. Cregan, sternly, and standing at her full height. "What have you done?"

"I have, in one breath, made her a proposal, which I have broken in the next," said Hardress calmly.

"You do well to boast of it. Comfort yourself, my love; you shall have your share. Now, what next? Abandon my house at once!"

"No, madam. I will not. I will address me to you, Mrs. Cregan, as I am entitled! I disown, I disown, I disown my own mine. If you will, I will break through your veins, and I will break through your heart, against such perfidy,

"Such inhuman villany as this! Away, sir, your presence is distressing to us both! My love! my love! my unoffending love, be comforted!" she added, gathering her niece tenderly in her arms, and pressing her head against her bosom.

"Mother," said Hardress, drawing in his breath between his teeth, "if you are wise, you will not urge me farther. Your power is great upon me; if you are merciful, do not put it in exercise at this moment."

"Do not, aunt!" said Anne, in a whisper, "let him do nothing against his own desire."

"He must do it, girl!" exclaimed Mrs. Cregan. "Must the selfish boy suppose that there are no feelings to be consulted besides his own in this matter? I will not speak for myself," she added, "but there is something towards his sister's honour, and his father's reproach, that there is something besides yourself that—" here she was interrupted in her

yes filled up. "Excuse me, my
g!" she said to Anne, "I must sit down.
This monster will kill me!" She burst into tears
as she spoke those words.

It now became Anne's turn to assume the
office of comforter. She stood by her aunt's
chair, with her arm round her neck, and loading
her with caresses. If ever a man felt like
a fiend, Hardress Cregan did so at that mo-
ment.

"I am a villain either way," he mutter-
ed below his breath. "There is no escaping
it. Well whispered, fiend! I have but a choice
between the two modes of evil, and there is
no resisting this! I cannot hold out against
this."

"Come Anne," said Mrs. Cregan, rising,
"let us look for privacy elsewhere, since this
gentleman loves so well to feast his eyes upon
the misery he has occasioned, that he will not
afford it to be here."

“ Stay, mother ! ” said Hardress suddenly rising and walking towards them, “ I have decided between them.”

“ Between what ? ”

“ I—I mean, that I am ready to obey you. I am ready, if Anne will forgive me, to fulfil my pledge. I ask her pardon and yours for the distress I have occasioned. From this moment I will offend no more. Your power, mother, has prevailed. Whether for good or evil, let Time tell ! ”

“ But will you hold to this ? ”

“ To death, and after. Surely that may answer.”

“ No more discoveries ? ”

“ None, mother, none.”

“ This, once for all, and at every hazard ? ”

“ At every hazard, and at every expense to soul or to body, here or hereafter.”

“ Fie ! fie ! Why need you use those desperate terms ? Where are you punning now ? ”

"Merely to speak to my servant. I will return to dinner."

"Why, how you tremble! You are pale and ill!"

"No, no, 'tis 'nothing. The air will take it away. Good bye, one moment, I will return to dinner."

He hurried out of the room, leaving the ladies to speculate together on the probable cause of his vacillation. What appeared most perplexing to Anne Chute was the circumstance that she knew he loved her as deeply and intensely as he said, and yet her admitting his addresses always seemed to occasion a feeling of terror in his mind. More than once, as his character unfolded on her view, she had been tempted to regret her hasty predilection; and had recurred, with a feeling of saddened recollection, to the quiet tenderness and cheerful affection, of the rejected Kyrle Daly.

In the meantime Hardress Cregan hurried

through the house in search of his boatman. Danny's wounds had become inflamed in the course of the night, and he was now lying in a feverish state in the little green room, in which Hardress had held his last interview with the poor huntsman. Hither he hastened, with a greater turbulence of mind than he had ever yet experienced.

"They are driving me upon it!" he muttered between his teeth. "They are gathering upon me, and urging me onward in my own despite! Why then, have ye, devils! I am among ye. Which way must it be done! Heaven, grant I may not one day weep for this!—but I am scourged to it!"

He entered the room. The check blind was drawn across the little window, and he could scarcely, for a moment, distinguish the face of his servant, as the latter raised himself in the bed at his approach. Old Nancy was standing with a bowl of whey in her hand

near the bedside. Hardress, as if unwilling to afford a moment's time for reflection, walked quickly to her, seized ~~her~~ by the shoulders, and thrust her out of the room. He then threw in the bolt of the door, and took a chair by the sick man's side. A silence of some moments ensued.

"Long life to you, master Hardress, 'tis kind o' you to come and see me dis mornin'," said the wounded Lord.

His master made no reply, but remained for a minute with his elbows on his knees, and his face buried between his hands.

"Danny," he said, at length, "do you remember a conversation which I had with you some weeks since on the Purple Mountain?"

"O den, master," said Danny putting his hands together with a beseeching look, "don't talk o' dat, any more. I ax heaven's pardon, an' I ax your pardon, for what I said; and I

hope and pray your honour 'ill tink of it no more. Many is de time I was sorry for it since, and moreover ~~now~~ being on my sick bed, an' tinkin' of every-~~ing~~ing."

"Pooh, pooh! you do not understand me! Do you remember your saying something about hiring a passage for Eily in a North American vessel, and——"

"I do, an' I ax pardon. Let me out o' de bed, an' I'll go down on my two knees——"

"Pish! bah! be silent. When you spoke of that, I was not wise enough to judge correctly. Do you mark? If that conversation were to pass again I would not speak, nor think, nor feel, as I did then."

Danny gaped and stared on him, as if at a loss.

"Look here! you asked me for a token of my approbation. Do you remember it? You bade me draw my glove from off my hand, and give it for a warrant. Danny," he

continued, plucking off the glove slowly, finger after finger ; “ my mind has altered. I married too young. I didn’t know my own mind. Your words were wiser than I thought. I am hampered in my will. I am burning with this thralldom. Here is my glove.”

Danny received it, while they exchanged a look of cold and fatal intelligence.

“ You shall have money ; ” Hardress continued, throwing a purse upon the bed. “ My wish is this. She must not live in Ireland. Take her to her father ? No, the old man would babble, and all would come to light. Three thousand miles of a roaring ocean may be a better security for silence. She could not keep her secret at her father’s. She would murmur it in her dreams. I have heard her do it. She must not stay in Ireland. And you, do you go with her, watch her, mark all her words, her wishes, I will find you money enough, and never let me see her more. Harm not, I say——Oh, harm

nót a hair of the poor wretch's head! — but never let me see her more! Do you hear? Do you agree?"

"O den, I'd do more dan dat for your honour, b—"

"Enough. When? when then? when?"

"Ah den, master Hardress, dear knows I'm so poorly after de proddin' I got from dem jettlemen, dat I don't know will I be able to lay dis for a few days, I'm tinken'."

"Well, when you go, here is your warrant."

He tore the back from Eily's letter and wrote in answer:—

"I am still in the same mind as when I left you. I accept your proposal. Put yourself under the bearer's care and he will restore you to your father."

He placed this black lie in the hand of his retainer, and hurried out of the room.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

HOW THE LITTLE LORD PUT HIS MASTER'S WISHES INTO ACTION.

WE lost sight of Eily after her parting with her uncle. She wasted no time on her journey homewards, but yet it was nearly dusk before the pony had turned in upon the little craggy road which led upward through the Gap. The evening was calm, and frosty, and every foot-fall of the animal was echoed from the opposite cliffs like the stroke of a hammer. A broken covering of crystal was thrown across the stream that bubbled downwards

through the wild valley, and the rocks and leafless trees, in those corners of the Glen which had escaped the direct influence of the sunshine, were covered with drooping spars of ice. Chilled by the nipping air, and fearful of attracting the attention of any occasional straggler in the wild, Eily had drawn her blue cloak around her face, and was proceeding quietly in the direction of the cottage, when the sound of voices on the other side of a hedge, by which she passed, struck on her ear.

"Seven pound tin, an' a pint o' whiskey ! the same 'money as I had for the dead match of her from Father O'Connor the priest, eastwards, in Castle-Island. Say the word now, seven pound tin, or lave it there."

"Seven pound."

"No, seven potind tin."

"I will not, I tell you."

"Well then, being relations as we are, I

never will break your word, although she's word that if it was between brothers."

In her first start of surprise at hearing this well remembered voice, Eily had dropt the mantle from her face. Before she could resume it, the last speaker had sprung up on the hedge and plainly encountered her.

At this moment, far away from home, forsaken, as it appeared, by her chosen, her own accepted love, living all alone in heart, and without even the feverish happiness of hope itself; at this mournful moment it would be difficult to convey any idea of the effect which was produced upon Eily by the sudden apparition of the first, though not the favoured, love of her girlish days. Both came simultaneously to a pause, and both remained gazing each on the other's face with a feeling too sudden and too full for immediate expression. The handsome though no longer healthy, countenance of the mountaineer was expanded to a

stare of pleasureable astonishment, while that of Eily was covered with an appearance of shame, sorrow, and perplexity. The pony likewise, drooping his head as she suffered the rein to slacken in her hand, seemed to participate in her confusion.

At length, Myles of the ponies, keeping his eyes still fixed on Eily, advanced towards her step after step, with the breathless suspense of King Leontes before the feigned statue.

"Eily!" he said at length, laying one hand upon the shaggy neck of the little animal, and placing the other against his throat, to keep down the passion which he felt gathering within, "Oh, Eily O'Connor, is it you I see at last?"

Eily, with her eyes lowered, replied in a whisper, which was all but utterly inaudible, "'Tis, Myles."

A long pause ensued. The poor mountaineer bent down his head in a degree of emotion which it would be difficult to describe, otherwise than

by adverting to the causes in which it originated. He was Eily's first declared admirer, and he was the cause of her present exile from her father's fire-side. He had the roughness, but at the same time the honesty, of a mountain cottager, and he possessed a nature, which was capable of being deeply, if not acutely, impressed by the circumstances just mentioned. It was long, therefore, before he could renew the conversation. At last he looked up and said :

"Why then, I felt you when you were below that lake, when I seen you, that it was somebody was there, greatly, although I couldn't see a bit o' you but the cloak. I wondered what is it made me feel so quare in my skin. Sure it's little notion I had who was in it, for a cloak. Little I thought —— (here he passed his hand across his eyes) Ah, what's the use o' talking?"

Eily was still unable to articulate a syllable.

"I saw the old man last week," continued Myles, "still at the old work on the rope-walk."

“Did you—speak to him?” whispered Eily.

“No. He gave me great anger (and justly) the next time he saw me after you going, in regard it was on my account, he said, (and justly too) that you were driven to do as you done. Oh, then, Miss Eily, why did you do that? Why didn't you come to me, unknownst to the old man, and says you, ‘Myles, I make it my request o' you, you wont ax me any more, for I cant have you at all?’ And sure, if my heart was to split open that minute, its the last word you'd ever hear from Myles.”

“There's only one person to blame in all this business,” murmured the unhappy girl, “and that is Eily O'Connell.”

“I don't say that,” returned the mountaineer. “It's no admiration to me you should be heart broken with all the persecution we gave you day after day. All I'm thinking, is, I'm so sorry you didn't mention it to myself, unknownst. Sure it would be betther for me than to be as I

was afther when I heard you wor gone. Lowry Looby that told me first of it when I was eastwards. Oh, vo! such a life as I led afther! Lonesome as these mountains looked before, when I used to come home thinken' of you, they looked ten times lonesomer afther I heard that story. The ponies—poor craturs, see 'em all how they're looken' down at us this moment, they didn't hear me spring the rattle on the mountain for a month afther. I suppose they thought it is in Garryowen I was."

Here he looked upward, and pointed to his herd, a great number of which were collected in groups on the broken cliff above the road, some standing so far forward on the projections of rock, as to appear magnified against the dusky sky. Myles sprung the large wooden rattle which he held in his hand, and in an instant all dispersed and disappeared like the clan of the highland chief, at the sound of their leader's whistle.

“Well, Myles,” said Eily, at length, collecting a little strength. “I hope we’ll see some happy days in Garryowen yet.”

“Heaven send it. I’ll pack off a boy to-night to town, or I’ll go myself if you like, or I’ll get you a horse and truckle, and guide it myself for you, or I’ll do any thing in the whole world that you’ll have me. Look at this. I’d rather be doing your bidding this moment than my own mother’s, and heaven forgive me, if that’s a sin. Ah, Eily, they may say this and that o’ you, in the place were you were born, but I’ll ever hold to it, I held to it all through, an’ I’ll hold to it to my death, that when you darken your father’s door again, you will send no shame before you !”

“You are right in that, Myles.”

“Did’nt I know I was ? And was’nt it that that broke my heart ? Look ! If one met me afther you flitted away, and saw me walking the road with my hands in my pocket, and

my head down, an' I thinking; an' if he sthruck me upon the shouldher an' 'Myles' says, he "do'nt grieve for her, she's this and that!" an' if he proved it to me, why, I'd look up that minute an' I'd smile in his face. I'd be as easy from that hour as if I never crossed your threshold at Garryowen! But knowing in my heart, and as my heart told me, that it never could be that way, that Eily was still the old girl always, an' hearing what they said o' you, an knowing that it was I that brought it all upon you,—oh, Eily! Eily!—Oh, Eily O'Connor, there is not that man upon Ireland ground that can tell what I felt. That was what killed me! That was what drove the pain into my heart, and kept me in the docthor's hands 'till now."

"Were you ill then, Myles?" Eily asked in a tone of greater tenderness and interest than she had ever shown to this faithful friend. He seemed to feel it, too; for he

turned away his head, and did not answer for some moments.

"Nothing to speak of;" he said, at length, "nothing, Eily, that could'nt be cured by a kind word or a look o' that kind. But where are you going now? The night is falling, and this is a lonesome road. The Sowth * was seen upon the Black Lake, last week, and few are fond of crossing the little bridge at dark since then."

"I am not afraid," said Eily.

"Are you going far a-past the gap? Let me guide the pony for you?"

"No, Myles, where I am going, I must go alone."

"Alone? Sure 'tis'nt to part me you will, now?"

"I must indeed, Myles."

"And what will I say to the old man,

* A gloomy spirit.

when I go and tell him that I saw Eily, an' spoke to her, an' that I know no more?"

"Tell him, if you like, that Eily is sorry for the trouble she gave him, and that before many days she hopes to ask his pardon on her knees. Good night, and heaven be with you, Myles! you ~~are~~ a good man."

"An' ~~an'~~ n't I to know where you stop itself?"

"Not now. You said, Myles, that you would like to do my bidding. My bidding is now that you would neither ask, nor look after, where I'm going, nor where I stop. If you do either one or the other, you will do me a great injury."

"~~If~~ Say no more, a-chree!" said Myles, "the word is enough. Well, Eily, good night! ~~by~~ your own good night back again to ~~you~~ ~~and~~ may the angels guide you on your road. Cover up your hands in your cloak, an' ~~hide~~ ~~your~~ face from the frost. I do

your bidding, but I do'nt like the look o' you that way, going up this lonesome glen alone, and a winter night coming on, an' not knowing where you're steering, or who you're trusting to. Eily, be said by me and let me go with you."

Eily again refused, and gave her hand to Myles, who pressed it between his, and seemed as loth to part with it as if it were a treasure of gold. At length, however, Eily disengaged herself, and put her pony to a trot. The mountaineer remained gazing after her until her figure was lost among the shadows of the rocks. He then turned on his path, and pursued the road which led down the valley, with his eyes fixed heavily upon the ground, and his head sunk forward in an access of deep and singular emotion.

Eily, meanwhile, pursued her journey to the cottage, where, as the reader is already aware, no news of her forgetful husband

had as yet been heard. Some days of painful suspense and solitude elapsed, and then came Danny Mann, with his young master's note.

It was the eve of Little Christmas, and Eily was seated by the fire, still listening, with the anxiety of defeated hope, to every sound that approached the cottage door. She held in her hand a small prayer book, in which she was reading, from time to time, the office of the day. The sins and negligences of the courted maiden, and the happy bride, came in a dread array before the memory of the forsaken wife, and she leaned forward with her cheek supported by one finger, to contemplate the long scroll, in silent penitence. They were for the most part, such transgressions as might, in a more worldly soul, be considered indicative of innocence rather than hopeless guilt, but Eily's was a young and tender conscience, that bore the burthen with reluctance, and with difficulty,

Poll Naughten was arranging at a small table, the three-branched candle, with which the vigil of this festival is celebrated in Catholic houses. While she was so occupied, a shadow fell upon the threshold, and Eily started from her chair. It was that of Danny Mann. She looked for a second figure, but it did not appear, and she returned to her chair with a look of agony and disappointment.

"Where's your master? Is'nt he coming?" asked Poll, while she applied a lighted rush to one of the branches of the candle.

"He is'nt," said Danny, in a surly tone, "he has something else to do."

He approached Eily, who observed, as he handed her the note, that he looked more pale than usual, and that his eye quivered with an uncertain and gloomy fire. She cast her eyes on the note, in the hope of finding there a refuge from the fears which crowded in upon her. But it came only to confirm them in all

their gloomy force. She read it word after word, and then letting her hand fall lifeless by her side, she leaned back against the wall, in an attitude of utter desolation. Danny avoided contemplating her in this condition, and stooped forward, with his hands expanded over the fire. The whole took place in silence so complete, that Poll was not yet aware of the transaction, and had not even looked on Eily. Again she raised the paper to her eyes, and again she read in the same well known hand, to which her pulses had so often thrilled and quickened, the same unkind, cold, heartless, loveless words. She thought of the first time on which she had met with Harbress, she remembered the warmth, the tenderness, the respectful zeal of his young and early attachment, she recalled his favourite of affection, and again she looked upon Harbress, and the contrast almost

She thought, that if he were
her, he might at least

have come and spoken a word at parting; even if he had used the same violence, as in their last interview. His utmost harshness would be kinder than indifference like this. It was an irremediable affliction, one of those frightful visitations from the effects of which, a feeble and unelastic character like that of this unhappy girl, can never after be recovered.

But though the character of Eily was, as we have termed it, unelastic; though, when once bowed down by a calamitous pressure, her spirits could not recover but took the drooping form, and retained it, even after that pressure was removed; still she possessed a heroism peculiar to herself; the noblest heroism of which humanity is capable; the heroism of endurance. The time had now arrived for the exercise of that faculty of silent sufferance, of which she had made her gentle boast to Hardress. now, that complaint would be in vain. Hardress loved her not, that

affections, and that, although she might disturb the quiet of her husband, she never could restore her own. She determined therefore to obey him at once, and without a murmur. She thought that Hardress's unkindness had its origin in a dislike to her, and did not at all imagine the possibility of his proceeding to such a degree of perfidy as he, in ~~fact~~ fact, contemplated. Had she done so, she would not have agreed to maintain the secrecy which she had promised.

While this train of meditation was still passing in her mind, Danny Mann advanced toward the place where she was standing, and said, without raising his eyes from her feet :—

"If you're agreeable to do what's in dat paper, *Miss Eily*, I have a boy below at de gap wit a horse an' car, an' you can set off to-night if you like."

Eily, as if yielding to a mechanical impulse, glided into the little room, which, during the

honey moon, had been furnished up and decorated for her own use. She restrained her eyes from wandering, as much as possible; and commenced with hurried and trembling hands her arrangements for departure. They were few and speedily effected. Her apparel was folded into her trunk, and, for once, she tied on her bonnet and cloak without referring to the glass. It was all over now!—it was a happy dream, but it was ended. Not a tear fell, not a sigh escaped her lips, during the course of those farewell occupations. The struggle within her breast was deep and terrible, but it was firmly mastered.

A few minutes only elapsed, before she again appeared at the door of the little chamber accoutered for the journey.

“Danny,” she said, in a faint, small voice, “I am ready.”

“Ready?” exclaimed Poll, “Is it going, you are, a-chree?”

Nothing could be more dangerous to Eily's firmness, at this moment, than any sound of commiseration, or of kindness. She felt the difficulty at once, and hurried to escape the chance of this additional trial.

"Poll," she replied, still in the same faint tone. "Good bye to you! I am sorry I have only thanks to give at parting, but I will not forget you, when it is in my power. I left my things within. I will send for them some other time."

"And where is it you're going? Danny, what's all this about?"

"What business is it of yours?" replied her brother, in a peevish tone, "or of mine eider? It is de master's bidding, an' you can ax him why he done it, when he comes, if you want to know."

"But the night will rain. It will be a bad night," said Poll. "I seen the clouds gatherin' for funder, an' I comen' down the mountain."

Eily smiled faintly, and shook her head, as if to intimate that the changes of the seasons would henceforth be to her a matter of trivial interest.

"If it be the master's bidding, it must be right, no doubt," said Poll, still looking in wonder and perplexity on Eily's dreary and dejected face, "but it is a queer story, that's what it is. ~~Won't~~ you ate any thing?"

"Oh, not a morsel!" said Eily, with a look of sudden and intense disgust, "but perhaps Danny may."

"No, but I'll drink a drop, if you have it," returned the Lord, in a tone which showed that he doubted much the likelihood of any refreshment of that kind remaining long inactive in the possession of his sister. To his delight and disappointment, however, Poll handed him a bottle from the neighbouring dresser which contained a considerable quantity of spirits. He drank off the whole at a draught, and we

cannot more clearly show the strong interest which Poll Naughten felt in the situation of Eily than by mentioning that she left this circumstance unnoticed.

Without venturing to reiterate her farewell, Eily descended, with a hasty but feeble step, the broken path which led to the Gap road, and was quickly followed by the little Lord. Committing herself to his guidance, she soon lost sight of the mountain cottage, which she had sought in hope and joy,—and which she now abandoned in despair.

CHAPTER XXIX.

HOW HARDRESS LOST AN OLD ACQUAINTANCE.

ELY had not been many minutes absent from the cottage, when the thunder-storm, predicted by Fighting Poll, commenced, amid all the circumstances of adventitious grandeur, by which those elemental convulsions are accompanied among the Kerry mountains. The rain came down in torrents, and the thunder clattered among the crags and precipices, with a thousand short reverberations. Phil Naughten, who had entered soon after the storm began,

was seated with his wife, at their small supper table, the latter complaining heavily of the assault made by Danny on her spirit-flask, which she, now, for the first time, discovered to be empty.

Suddenly, the latch of the door was raised, and Hardress Cregan entered, with confusion and terror in his appearance. The dark frieze great coat in which his figure was enveloped seemed to be drenched in rain, and his face was flushed and glistening with the beating of the weather. He closed the door, with difficulty, against the strong wind, and still keeping his left hand on the latch, he said:—

“ I am afraid I have come too late. Is Danny here ? ”

“ No sir,” said Phil, “ he’s gone these two hours.”

“ And Eily ? ”——

“ An’ Eily along with him. He gave her papers that made her go.”

Hardress heard this, with an appearance of satisfaction. He leaned his back against the door, crossed his feet and fixed his eyes upon the ground; while a silent soliloquy passed within his mind, of which the following is a transcript: *

“It is done, then. I would have saved her, but it is too late. Now, my good angel, be at peace with me. I would have saved her. I obeyed your call. Amid the storm, the darkness, and the rain, I flew to execute your gentle will. But the devil had taken me at my word already, and found me a rapid minister. Would I had saved her! Ha! What whisper’s that? There can come nothing worse of it, than I have ordered. Forsaken! Banished! That is the very worst that can befall her. And for the consequences, why, if she be so weak and silly a thing to pine and die of the slight, let nature take the blame, not me. I never meant it. But if that madman should exceed

my orders. And if he should," Hardress suddenly exclaimed aloud, while he started from the door and trembled with fury; "and if he should," he repeated, extending his arms, and spreading his fingers as if in act to gripe, "wherever I meet him, in the city, or in the desert, in the lowest depth of this accursed valley, or on the summit of the mountain, where he tempted me, I will tear his flesh from off his bones, and gibbet him between these fingers for a miscreant, and a ruffian!"

He sunk, exhausted by this frantic burst of passion, into a chair, the chair which Eily had occupied on that evening. Phil Naughten and his wife left their seats in astonishment, and gazed on him, and on one another in silence. In a few minutes, Hardress rose more calmly from the chair, and drew his sleeves out of the great coat, which he handed to Boll; signifying, by a motion of his hand that she should hang it near the fire. While she obeyed his

wishes, he resumed his seat in silence. For a considerable time, he remained leaning over the back of the chair, and gazing fixedly upon the burning embers. The fatigue of his long journey, on foot, and the exhaustion of his feelings, at length brought on a heavy slumber, and his head sunk upon his breast, in deep, though not undisturbed, rest.

Poll and her husband resumed their meal, and afterwards proceeded to their customary evening occupations. Phil began to repair the pony's straddle, while Poll twisted the flaxen cords, according as her husband required them.

"I'll tell you what, Phil," said his wife, in a low whisper, "there's something going on, to-night, that is not right. I'm sorry I let Eily go."

"Whisht, you foolish woman!" returned her husband, "what would be going on? Mind your work, an' don't wake the master. D'ye hear how he moans in his sleep?"

"I do; an' I think that moan isn't for

nothing. Who is it he was talking of tearing a while ago ? ”

“ I do’nt know: there’s no use in thinking about it at all. This ~~is~~ is a cold night with poor M^c Donough in his grave, the first he ever spent there.”

“ And so it is. Were there many at the funeral ? ”

“ A power. The whole country was after the hearse. You never heard such a cry in your life, as was set up in the church-yard by poor Garret O’Neil, his own ~~own~~ *own* ~~own~~ *own*, after the grave was covered in. The whole place was in tears ! ”

“ Sure Garret was’nt with him this many year ? ”

“ He was not, until the very day before he died, when he ~~seen~~ *saw* him in his own room. You remember a long wattle that Garret used always be carrying in his hand ? ”

“ I do well.”

“That was given him be the master, M^e Donough, himself. Garret axed him once of a Hansel-Monday, for his *hansel*,* and 'tis what he gave him was that wattle, as it was standing behind the parlour doore. ‘Here, Garret,’ says he, ‘take this wattle, and when you meet with a greater fool than yourself, you may give it to him.’ Garret took it, without a word, and the master never seen him after 'till the other day, when he walked into his bed room where he was lying in his last sickness, with the wattle still in his hand. The master knew him again, the minute he looked at him. ‘And didn't you part the wattle yet, Garret?’ says he. ‘No, sir,’ says Garret, ‘I can find no where a greater fool than I am myself.’ ‘You show some sense in that, any way,’ says the master.—‘Ah,

* On the first Monday of the new year (called Hansel Monday) it is customary to bestow trifling gifts among one's acquaintances, &c. which are denominated *hansels*.

Garret,' says he, 'I b'lieve I'm going.' 'Going where, sir?' says Garret. 'Oh, a long journey,' says he, 'an' one that I'm but little provided for.' 'An' did you know you'd be going that journey?' says Garret. 'I did, heaven forgive me,' says M^c Donough. 'An' you made no preparation for it?' says Garret. 'No preparation in life,' says the master to him again. Well, Garret moved over near the bedside, and took the master's hand, and put the wattle into it, just that way. 'Well,' says he, 'take your wattle again. You desired ~~me~~ it, until I'd meet a greater fool than myself, an' now I found him; for if you knew you'd be taking that journey, an' made no preparation for it, you are a greater fool than ~~me~~ Garret was.' "

"That was frightful!" said Poll, "Husht! Did you hear that? Well, if ever the dead woke, they ought to wake to-night! Did you ever hear such tunder?"

"'Tis great, surely. How sound Mither

Hardress sleeps, an' not to be woke by that !
Put the candle on the stool at this side, Poll, an'
don't disturb him."

They now proceeded with their employment in silence, which was seldom broken. Any conversation, that passed, was carried on in low and interrupted whispers, and all possible pains were used to avoid disturbing, by the slightest noise, the repose of their weary guest and patron.

But the gnawing passion hunted him, even into the depth of sleep. A murmur occasionally broke from his lips, and a hurried whisper, sometimes indicative of anger and command, and sometimes of sudden fear, would escape him. He often changed his position, and it was observed by those who watched him, that his breathing was oppressed and quick, and his brow was damp with large drops of moisture.

"The Lord defend and forgive us all !" said Phil, in a whisper to his wife, "I'm afeerd, I'll

judge nobody, but I'm afeerd there's some bad work, as you say, going on this night."

"The Lord protect the poor girl that left us!" whispered Poll.

"Amen!" replied her husband aloud.

"Amen!" echoed the sleeper;—and following the association awakened by the response, he ran over, in a rapid voice, a number of prayers, such as are used in the morning and evening service of his church.

"He's saying his litanies," said Poll; "Phil, come into the next room, or wake him up, either one or the other. I don't like to be listenin' to him. 'Tis'nt right of us to be taking advantage of any body in their dhramas. Many is the poor boy that hung himself that way in his sleep."

"'Tis a bad business," said Phil, "I don't like the look of it, at all, I tell you."

"My glove! My glove!" said the dreaming Hardress, "you used it against my meaning."

I meant but banishment. We shall both be hanged, we shall be hanged for this—”

“Come, Phil! Come, come!” cried Poll Naughten, with impatience.

“Stop, eroo! Stop!” cried her husband. “He’s choking, I b’lieve! Poll, Poll! the light, the light! Get a cup o’ wather.”

“Here it is! Shake him, Phil! Masther Hardhress! Wake, a’ ra gal!”

“Wake, Masther Hardhress, wake! sir, if you please!”

The instant he was touched, Hardress started from his chair, as if the spring that bound him to it had been suddenly struck, and remained standing before the fire in an attitude of strong terror. He did not speak—at least, the sounds to which he gave utterance could not be traced into any intelligible form, but his look and gesture were those of a man oppressed with a horrid apprehension. According, however, as his nerves recovered their waking vigour,

and the real objects by which he was surrounded became known to his senses, a gradual relief appeared to steal upon his spirits, his eyelids dropped, his muscles were relaxed and a smile of intense joy was visible upon his features. He let his arms fall slowly by his side, and sunk down, once more, with a murmur of painful satisfaction, into the chair which he had left.

But the vision, with which he had been terrified, had made too deep a sign on his imagination, to be at once removed. His dream had merely represented in act, a horrid deed, the apprehension of which had shaken his soul with agony when awake, and had brought him amid those obstacles of storm and darkness, to the cottage of his neglected wife. His fears were still unquieted; the frightful image, that bestrode his slumbers, yet haunted him, awake; and opposed itself with a ghastly vigour to his eyes, in whatever

direction they ~~were~~ turned. Unable to endure the constant recurrence of this indestructible suggestion, he at length hurried out of the cottage. He paid no attention to the voice of Poll Naughten, who followed him to the door, with his great coat in her hand; but ran down the crags, and in the direction of his home, with the speed of one distract.

The light which burned in the drawing room window showed that all the family had not yet retired. His mother, as he learned from old Nancy, was still expecting his return. She was almost alone in the house, for Mr. Cregan had left the cottage a fortnight before, in order to escort Miss Chute to her own home.

She was seated at a table, and reading some work appropriate to the coming festival, when Haddress made his appearance at the door, still drenched in rain, and pale with agitation and

fatigue. He remained on the threshold, leaning with one arm against the jamb, and gazing on the lady.

"What, up yet, mother?" he said, at length, "where's Anne?"

"Ha! Hardress. O my dear child, I have been anxiously expecting you. Anne? Do you forget that you took leave of her a fortnight since?"

"I had forgotten it. I now remember. But not for ever?"

"Why should you say it? What do you mean?" said Mrs. Cregan. "Is not your bridal fixed for the second of February? But I have mournful news to tell you, Hardress."

"Let me hear none of it!" exclaimed the unhappy youth, with great vehemence. "It will drive me mad at last. Nothing but mournful news! I'm sick of it. Wherever I turn my eyes they encounter nothing now but mourning. Cries, and corpses, graves, and darkness,

all around me ! " Mother, your son will end his days in Bedlam. Start as you will. I say but what I feel, and fear. I find my reason going fast to wreck. O mother, I will die an idiot yet ! "

" My child ! "

" ~~My~~ child ! " Hardress reiterated with petulant emphasis. " And if I was your child, could you not care more kindly for my happiness ? It was you ~~that~~ urged me on to this. Mind, I comply, but it was you that urged me. You brought me ~~into~~ danger, and when I would have withdrawn, you held me there. I told you that I was engaged, that heaven had heard, and earth recorded my pledge, and that I could not break it. O mother, if you were a mother, and if you saw your son caught by a treacherous passion, if you saw that he was weak, and yielding, and likely to be overcome, you should have strengthened him. It would have been a mother's part to warn him off, to take the side of honesty against

his weakness, and make him virtuous in his own despite. But this you did not. I was struggling for my failing honesty, and you strove against me. I rose again and again, almost discomfited, yet still unwilling to yield up all claim to truth, and again and again you struck me down. Behold me now! You have succeeded fully. I am free now to execute your will. To marry, or hang, whichever you please."

"Hardress!" exclaimed his mother, in an agony—"I——"

"Oh, no more remonstrance, mother, your remonstrances have been my curse and bane, they have destroyed me for this world, and for the next."

"You shock me to the soul."

"Well, I am sorry for it.—Go on. Tell me this mournful news. It can be but another drop in the ocean. I told you that my reason was affected, and so it is. I know

it by the false colouring that has grown upon my senses. My imagination is filled continually with the dreariest images, and there is some spirit within me that tinges, with the same hue of death, the real objects I behold. At morning, if I look upon the east I think it has the colour of blood, and at night, when I gaze on the advancing shadows, I think of palls, and hearse-plumes, and habits of mourning. Mother, I fear I have not long to live."

"Fie, Hardress, fie! Are you growing superstitious? For shame! I will not talk with you to-night upon that subject, nor will I tax you with the manifest unkindness of your charges on myself, so often refuted, yet now again repeated. I have a matter of weightier interest to communicate. You know Mrs. Daly, the mother of your young friend Kyrle?"

"There again!" exclaimed Hardress, starting from his seat, and speaking with passionate loudness. "There again, mother!

Another horrid treason! Why, the whole world are joining in one cry of reprobation on my head. Another black and horrid perfidy! Oh, Kyrle, my friend, my calm, high-minded, virtuous, and serene companion! He trusted me with every thing, told me his secrets, showed me his fears, and commended his hopes to my patronage. And what have I done? I pledged myself to be his friend. I lied! I have supplanted him! How shall I meet him now for evermore? I feel as if the world were met to spit upon my face. This should be my desert. O fool! blind fool!—Anne Chute! What was Anne Chute to me, and I to her, that I should thus destroy my own reputation, betray my friend, resist my maker, and forsake my——” Suddenly arresting his speech at this juncture, he sunk back into his chair, and added in a low murmur—
“Well, mother, tell this mournful news at once.”

“It is soon told,” said Mrs. Cregan, who

had now become too well accustomed to those bursts of transient passion in her son, to afford them any angry consideration. "Poor Mrs. Daly is dead."

"Dead!"

"But this evening I heard it. The circumstance is one of peculiar melancholy. She died quite unexpectedly in her accouchement."

"And if the virtuous are thus visited," said Hardress, after a pause, lifting his hands and eyes, "what should not I expect? I wish I were fit to pray, that I might pray for that kind woman."

"There is one act of mercy in your power," said his mother, "you will be expected at the wake and funeral."

"And there I shall meet with Kyrle!"

"What then?"

"Oh, nothing, nothing." He paused for several minutes, during which, he leaned on the table in a meditative posture. His countenance, at length, assumed an appearance of more peaceful grief, and it became evident, from

the expression of his eye, that a more quiet train of feeling was passing through his mind.

"Poor Mrs. Daly !" he said at last. "If one would be wise at all times, how little he would sacrifice to the gratification of simple passion, in such a world as this. *Imprimis*," he continued, counting on his finger ends. "*Imprimis*, a cradle, item, clothing, item, a house, item, fire, item, food, item, a coffin ; the best require no more than these, and for the worst, you need only add item, a gallows, and you have said enough."

Mrs. Cregan heard this speech without the keen anxiety which she would have felt, if Har- dress had been less passionate in his general manner, and less extravagant in his mode of speech. But knowing this, she heeded little in him what would have filled her with terror in another.

"Well, will you go to the wake, Har- dress ?" she said. "You must set out to- morrow morning early."

“I will,” said Hardress. “It is a long distance, but I can be there, at all events, by night-fall. When does the funeral take place?”

“I suppose after to-morrow. I will have the curricie at the door by day-break, for you must set me down at Castle Chute. Go now, and change your dress at once, or you will suffer for it. Nancy shall take you a warm foot-bath, and a hot drink, when you are in your room.”

Hardress returned without farther question. The idea of meeting with Kyrle Daly, after the unmanly neglect, and ~~even~~ betrayal of his interests, was now the one which occupied his sole attention. Half love is vanity; at least, a fair moiety of Hardress Cregan's later passion might be placed to the account of that effeminate failing. It could not, therefore, continue to maintain its hold upon his heart against a passion so new and terrible as that of remorse. His love for Anne Chute was now entirely dormant in his mind, and his

reason was at full liberty to estimate the greatness of his guilt, without even the suggestion of a palliative. When we add to this, the cruel uncertainty in which he remained with respect to the fate of Eily O'Connor, it is probable that few, who hear the story, will envy the repose of Hardress Cregan.

For one instant only, during his conversation with Danny Mann, the idea of Eily's death had flashed upon his mind, and for that instant it had been accompanied with a sensation of wilful pleasure. The remembrance of this guilty thought now haunted him with as deep a feeling of remorse, as if that momentary assent had been a positive act. Whenever his eyelids drooped, a horrid chain of faces passed before his imagination, each presenting some characteristic of death or pain, some appearing to threaten, and others to deride him. In this manner the long and lonely night crept by, and the dreary winter dawn found him still unrefreshed and feverish.

CHAPTER XXX.

HOW HARDRESS GOT HIS HAIR DRESSED IN
LISTOWEL, AND HEARD A LITTLE NEWS.

HE rose, and found that his mother was already equipped for the journey. They took a hurried breakfast by candle-light, while Mike was employed in putting the horses to the curricie. The lakes were covered by a low mist, that concealed the islands and the distant shores, and magnified the height of the gigantic mountains, by which the waters are walled in. Far above this slumbering cloud of vapour, the close and wide-spread forests were seen along the sides of

the stupendous ridge, the trees so much diminished by the distance, and by the illusion produced by the novelty of the point of vision, as to resemble a garden of mangel-worzel.

Hardress had just taken his seat in the vehicle beside his mother, when a servant in livery rode up to the door, and touching his hat, put a letter into his hand. It contained an invitation from Hepton Connolly, to a hunting dinner, which he was about to give in the course of the month. Hardress remained for a moment in meditation.

“Well, how long am I to stop here waiting for my answer?” asked the messenger, (the insolent groom alluded to in an early portion of the

Hardress stared on him, in silence, for some moments. “You had better go in and breakfast, I think;” he said, “you don’t intend to return without alighting?”

“Is it for Hepton Connolly? Why then

you may take your *vido*, I don't, nor for any other mather under the sun. I was going to take my breakfast over at the Inn, but as you make the offer, I'll not pass your doore."

"You do me a great deal of honour. When does the hunt take place?"

"In three weeks time, I believe, or something thereabouts."

"Not sooner?"

"No. I wanted him to have it at once, for he could'nt have finer weather, an' the mare is in fine condition for it. But when Connolly takes a thing into his head, you might as well be talking to an ass."

"Well," said Hardress, "tell your master, that you found me just driving from home; and that I will come."

Saying this he drove away, while his mother remained still wrapt in silent astonishment at the fellow's impudence.

"Such," said Hardress, "is the privilege of a

clever groom. That rogue was once a simple, humble cottager, but fortune favoured him. He assisted Connolly to win a sweepstakes, which gained him a reputation on the turf; and fame has since destroyed him. You would not know whether to choose between indignation and laughter, if you were present at the conversations that sometimes take place between him and his master."

"If, instead of winning me the King's plate, he could win me the King's crown, I could not endure him," said the proud mother.

"Nor I," returned her prouder son. "Nor I, indeed."

About noon, they stopped to bait and hear mass, at the town of Listowel. Mrs. Cregan and her son were shown into a little parlour at the Inn, the window of which looked out upon the square. The bell of the Chapel was ringing for last mass on the other side, and numbers of people, in their holiday attire, were seen in the

wide area, some hurrying toward the Chapel gate, some loitering in groups about the square, and some sitting on the low window-sill stones.

The travellers joined the first mentioned portion of the crowd, and performed their devotions ;—at least, they gave the sanction of their presence to the ceremonial of the day. When they had returned to the Inn, and taken their places in the little parlour, Mrs. Cregan, after fixing her eyes for a moment on her son, exclaimed :

“Why, Hardress, you are a perfect fright. Did you dress to-day?”

“Not particularly.”

“Do you intend to call in at Castle-Chute?”

“Just to visit in passing.”

“Then I would advise you, by all means, to do something at your toilet before you leave this.”

Hardress took up a mirror, which lay on the wooden chimney-piece, and satisfied himself, by a single glance, of the wisdom of his mother's

suggestion. His eyes were blood-shot, his beard grown and grisly, and his hair hanging about his temples in most ungraceful profusion. He rang the little bell which lay on the table, and summoned the landlady to his presence.

It would be difficult, she told him, to procure a hair-cutter to-day, being holiday, but there was one from Garryowen, below, that would do the business as well as any one in the world, if he had only got his scissors with him.

Hardress started at the name of Garryowen ; but, as he did not remember the hair cutter, and felt an anxiety to hear news from that quarter, he desired the stranger to be shown into another room, where he proposed effecting the necessary changes in his attire.

He had scarcely taken his seat before the toilet, when a soft tap at the door, and the sound of a small, squeaking voice, announced the arrival of the hair cutter. On looking round

him, Hardress beheld a small, thin faced, red haired little man, with a tailor's shears dangling from his finger, bowing and smiling with a timid and conciliating air. In an evil hour for his patience, Hardress consented that he should commence operations.

"The piatez were very airly this year, sir," he modestly began, after he had wrapped a check apron about the neck of Hardress, and made the other necessary arrangements.

"Very early indeed. You need'nt cut so fast."

"Very airly, sir. The white eyes especially. Them white eyes are fine piatez. For the first four months I would'nt ax a better piatie than a white eye, with a bit o' butter, or a piggin of milk, or a bit o' bacon, if one had it; but after that the meal goes out of 'em, and they gets wet and bad. The cups ar'nt so good in the beginnen o' the saison, but they hould better. Turn your head more to the light, sir, if you

please. The cups indeed are a fine substantial, lasting piatie. 'There's great nutriment in 'em for poor people, that would have nothen else with them but themselves, or a grain o' salt. 'There's no piatie that eats better, when you have nothen but a bit o' the little one (as they say) to eat with a bit o' the big. No piatie that eats so sweet with point."

"With point?" Hardress repeated, a little amused by this fluent discussion of the poor hair-cutter, upon the varieties of a dish, which, from his childhood, had formed almost his only article of nutriment; and on which he expatiated with as much cognoscence and satisfaction, as a fashionable gourmand might do on the culinary productions of Eustache Ude. "What is point?"

"Don't you know what that is, sir? I'll tell you in a minute. A joke that them that has nothen to do, an plenty to eat, make upon the poor' people that has nothen to eat, and plenty

to do. That is, when there's dry piatez on the table, and enough of hungry people about it, and the family would have, may be, only one bit of bacon hanging up above their heads, they'd peel a piate first, and then they'd *point* it up at the bacon, and they'd fancy within their own minds, that it would have the taste o' the mait when they'd be aten it, after. That's what they call point, sir. A cheap sort o' diet it is, lord help us, that's plenty enough among the poor people in this country. A great plan for making a small bit of pork* go a long way in a large family."

"Indeed it is but a slender sort of food. Those scissars you have are dreadful ones."

"Terrible, sir. I sent my own over to the forge before I left home, to have an eye put in it; only for that I'd be smarter, a deal. Slender food it is, indeed! There's a ~~deal~~ o' poor people here in Ireland, sir, that are run so hard at times, that the wind of a bit o' mait is as

good to 'em, as the mait itself to them that would be used to it. The platez are every thing, the *kitchen** little or nothing. But there's a sort o' platez, (I do'nt know did your honour 'ever taste 'em?) that's gotten greatly in vogue now among 'em, an' is killing half the country; the white piaties, a piatie that 'has great produce, an' requires but little manure, an' will grow in very poor land; but has no more strength, or nourishment in it, than if you had boiled a handful o' saw-dust and made gruel of it, or put a bit of a deal boord between your teeth, and thought to make a breakfast of it. The black bulls themselves are better. Indeed the black bulls are a deal a better piatie than they're thought. When you'd peel 'em, they look as black as Indigo, an' you'd have no mind to 'em at all; but I declare they're very sweet in the mouth, an' very strengthening.

* Any thing eaten with potatoes.

The English reds are a nate *piatie*, too, and the apple *piatie*, (I don't know what made 'em be given up) an' the kidney, (though delicate of rearing) but give me the cups for all, that will hould the meal in 'em to the last, and wo'nt require any inthricket tillage. Let a man have a middling sized pit o' cups again' the winter, a small *caish* (pig) to pay his rent, an' a handful o' turf behind the doore, an' he can defy the world."

"You know as much, I think," said Hardress, "of farming, as of hair-cutting."

"Oyeh, if I had nothen to depend upon but what heads come across me this way, sir, I'd be in a poor way, enough. But I have a little spot o' ground besides."

"And a good taste for the produce."

"Twas kind father for me to have that same. Did you ever hear tell, sir, of what they call lime-stone broth?"

"Never."

"'Twas my father first made it. I'll tell you the story, sir, if you'll turn your head this way a minute."

Hardress had no choice but to listen.

"My father went once upon a time about the country, in the idle season, seeing would he make a penny at all by cutting hair, or setting razhurs and penknives, or any other job that would fall in his way. Well, an good—he was one day walking alone in the mountains of Kerry without a haip'ny in his pocket, (for though he travelled a foot it cost him more than he earned) an knowing there was but little love for a County Limerick man in the place where he was, an' being half perished with the hunger, an' evening drawing nigh, he didn't know well what to do with himself till morning. Very good, he went along the wild road, an if he did he soon see a farm house, at a little distance, o' one side; a snug looking place with the smoke curling up out of the chimney

an all tokens of good living inside. Well, some people would live where a fox would starve. What do you think did my father do? He wouldn't beg, (a thing one of our people never done yet, thank heaven!) an he had'nt the money to buy a thing, so what does he do? He takes up a couple o' the big lime-stones, that were lying on the road, in his two hands, an away with him to the house. 'Lord save all here!' says he, walken in the doore. 'And you kindly,' says they. 'I'm come to you' says he, this way, looking at the two lime-stones, 'to know would you let me make a little lime-stone broth over your fire, until I'll make my dinner?' 'Lime-stone broth!' says they to him again, 'what's that eroo?' 'Broth made o' lime-stones,' says he, 'what else?'—'We never heard of such a thing,' says they. 'Why then you may hear it now,' says he, 'and see it also, if you'll gi' me a pot an a couple o' quarts o' soft water.' 'You can can have it an

welcome,' says they. So they put down the pot an the water, an my father went over, an tuk a chair hard by the pleasant fire for himself, an put down his two lime-stones to boil, an kep stirring them round like stirabout. Very good, well, by an by when the wather began to boil, 'Tis thickening finely,' says my father; 'now if it had a grain o' salt at all, 't would be a great improvement to it.' 'Raich down the salt box, Nell,' says the man o' the house to his wife. So she did. 'O, that's the very thing just,' says my father, shaking some of it into the pot. So he stirred it again a while, looking as sober as a minister. By an by, he takes the spoon he had stirring it, an tastes it. 'It is very good now,' says he 'although it wants something yet.' 'What it is?' says they. 'Oyeh, wisha nothing,' says he, 'may be 'tis only fancy o' me.' 'If it's any thing we can give you,' says they, 'you're welcome to it.' 'Tis very good as it is,' says he, 'but when I'm at home, I find

it gives it a fine flavour just 'to boil a little knuckle o' bacon, or mutton trotters, or any thing that way along with it.' 'Raich hether that bone o' sheep's head we had' at dinner yesterday, Nell,' says the man o' the house. 'Oyeh don't mind it,' says my father, 'let it be as it is.' 'Sure if it improves it, you may as well,' says they. '*Baithershin!*'* says my father, putting it down. So after boiling it a good piece longer, 'Tis as fine lime-stone broth,' says he 'as ever was tasted, an if a man had a few piatez,' says he, looking at a pot of 'm that was smoking in the chimney corner, 'he could'nt des're a better dinner.' They gave him the piatez, and he made a good dinner of themselves, an the broth, not forgetting the bone, which he polished equal to chaney, before he let it go. The people themselves tasted it, an thought it as good as any mutton broth in the world."

* Bè it so.

“Your father, I believe, knew how to amuse his friends after a short journey as well as any other traveller.”

The fellow leered at Hardress, thrust out his lips, and winked with both eyes, in a manner which cannot be expressed. “He was indeed a mighty droll, funny man. Not interrupting you, sir, I’ll tell you a thing that happened him in the hair-cutting line that flogs all Munster, I think, for ‘cuteness.’”

“I am afraid I cannot wait to hear it. I have a great way to go to-day, and a great deal to do before I set off.”

“That’s just bidden me go on with my story, sir, for the more I talk the faster I work, for ever. Just turn your head this way, sir, if you please. My father—a little more to the light, sir—my father was sitting one fine morning in his little shop, curling a front curl belonging to a lady (we wont mention who) in the neighbourhood, with the sun shining in the doore,

an he singing a little song 'for himself; an meself, a craithur, sitting by the fire, looking about me and sayen nothing. Very well, all of a sudden, a gentleman tall and well mounted rode up to the doore, an——‘Hello!’ says he, calling out, ‘can I get myself shaved here?’ says he. ‘Why not, plase your honour?’ says my father, starting up, an laying by the front out of his hand. So he ‘lit off’ his horse an come in. He was a mighty bould fierce looking gentleman, with a tundhering long sword be his side, down, an a pair o’ whiskers as big an as red as a fox’s brush, and eyes as round as them two bull’s eyes in the window panes,—an they having a sthrange twisht in ‘em, so that when he’d be looking you sthraight in the face, you’d think it’s out at the doore he’d be looking. Besides that, when he’d spake, he used to give himself a loud roistering way, as if you were a mile off, an not willing to come nearer or to be said by him. ‘Do you mind,

now,' says he, 'an' he taking a chair oppozzite the windee, while my father smartened himself an' bate up a lather. 'Ever and always, since I was the 'heighth of a bee's knee,' says he, 'I had a mortal enmity to seeing a drop o' my own blood, an' I'll tell you what it is,' says he. 'What is it, sir?' says my father. 'I'll make a clear bargain with you now,' says the gentleman. So he took out a half crown an' laid it upon the table, an' after that he drew his sword, and laid it hard by the half crown. 'Do you see them two now?' says he, 'I do, surely,' says my father. 'The half crown will be yours,' says the gentleman, if you'll shave me without drawn my blood, but if I see as much as would make a breakfast for——(he named an animal that I won't mention after him now) if I see so much after you,' says he, 'I'll run this swoord through your body, as sure as there's nait in mutton. So look, before you lep, if you won't take the bargain, say it, and let

me hide away,' says he. 'This was in times when a gentleman, that way, would think as little a'most of doing a thing o' the kind to a poor Catholic, as he would now of saying it, —so well became my father to look to himself. 'You'll never have it to say o' me,' says my father, 'that I would'nt trust my hand *so far* at any rate in the business I was bred to.' So to it they fell, an' as Providence ordered it, my father shaved him without one gash, an' put the half-crown in his pocket. 'Well, now 'tis done,' says the gentleman, 'but you're a foolish man.' 'How so sir?' says my father. 'Because so sure as I saw the blood,' says the other, 'I'd make my word good.' 'But you never would see the blood, sir,' says my father quite easy, 'because I'd see it before you, an' I'd cut your throath with the razhur.' Well, 'twas as good as a play to see the look the gentleman gave him when he said that. He

didn't answer him a word but mounted his horse and rode away."

"He found his match in the hair-cutter," said Hardress, rejoiced as the story ended.

"I'll be bound, sir, he was in no hurry to make bargains o' that kind any more. 'T was a mighty good answer, sir, wasn't it?"

"A desperate one at all events."

"Ah, desperate, you may say that; but my father was sure of his hand. I'll tell you another droll thing that happened my father, once when——"

But the patience of his listener was here completely stranded. The hair-cutter had got such a miserable pair of shears that he was obliged to use as much exertion in clipping the hair, as a tinker or a plumber might do in cutting sheet lead. Besides, being accustomed to that professional flippancy of movement which, with proper instruments, might have expedited the operation, he made no allowance for the badness of

his scissors, but clipped and plucked away as fast as usual ; thus contriving to tear up half as much by the roots as he removed in the usual course of business. This, and other circumstances, induced Hardress to place a decided negative in the way of his anecdotes, until he had concluded his task.

This being accomplished, Hardress raised his hand to his head, and experienced a sensation on the palm, somewhat similar to that which would be produced by placing it on an inverted hair brush. On looking in the glass, he discovered that his hair had been cut into a fashion which enjoys a lasting popularity at fairs and cottage merry-makings ; but, however consistent with the interests of persons who only employed a barber once in a quarter, and then supposed that the closer he cut the better value he gave for the money, it was by no means in accordance with the established notions of good taste. There were indeed no gaps, as he boasted, for

he had cut it almost as bare as a wig-block, leaving only a narrow fringe in front, from ear to ear, like the ends of a piece of silk. There was no help, however, for mischief once effected, so that Hardress paid him without remark, and paid him liberally.

The little hair-cutter took it for granted, by the handsome manner in which his customer had compensated for his services, that he was highly gratified with the manner in which they had been performed.

"If your honour," he said, bowing very low, "would be passing through Garryowen, an' would be inclined to lave any o' your hair behind you, may be you'd think of Dunat O'Leary's shop, on the right hand side o' the sthreet, three doores down from Mihl O'Connor's, the rope-maker's?"

"I will, I will," said Hardress, turning suddenly away.

Mr. O'Leary walked slowly to the door, and again returned.

“There’s a great set o’ lads about the place, sir,” he said, in his usual shrill voice, while a slight degree of embarrassment appeared in his manner, “an’ they’re for ever christenin’ people out o’ their names, till a man is better known by a nick name than by his own. ’Tis ten to one, please your honour, that you’ll be the surer of finding me by asking for Foxy Dunat, than for my own lawful name, they’re such a set o’ lads.”

“Very well, I will. Good morning. Foxy Dunat?”

“Yes sir, Foxy, in regard of the red hair that’s on me. Ah, there’s no standing them lads.”

“Very well, good morning Foxy Dunat. I’ll remember.”

“Good morning to your honour. Stay!” he once more returned from the door, “See what I was doing; carrying your honour’s hair away with me.”

“Well, and what business do you suppose

I have of it now?—I am not a wig-maker.”

“I don’t know, sir, but people mostly likes to put it up in some safe place again’ the day of judgment, as they say.”

“The day of judgment!”

“Yes, please your honour. We must have every thing about us then, that ever belonged to us, and a man would look droll that time without his hair.”

Hardress was not in a humour for jesting, but he could not avoid smiling in secret at this conceit.

“Very well;” he said, tapping the hair-cutter on the shoulder, and looking gravely in his face. “As I am going a long journey at present, I will feel obliged by your keeping it for me until then, and I will call to you if I want it.”

“As your honour feels agreeable,” said Dunat, again bowing low, and moving towards the door. Nevertheless, he did not leave the

room, until he had made the young gentleman acquainted with all the circumstances that occasioned his absence from home at this moment. In doing so, he unwarily touched Hardress to the life. He had come, he said, in consequence of a letter he had received from a neighbour's daughter that had run away from her father, and was hid somewhere among the Kerry mountains.

"A letter which *you* received!" exclaimed Hardress, in strong surprise.

"Yes, sir; telling me she was alive, and bidding me let the old man know of it; the old rope-maker I mentioned a while ago. Since I came, I heard it reported at Castle Island, this morning, that she was drowned somewhere in the Flesk."

"Drowned! Eily drowned!" Hardress suddenly exclaimed, starting from a reverie, as the single word struck upon his hearing.

"Eily was her name, sure enough," re-

plied O'Leary, staring on him, "howsomdever you come to know it."

"I—I—you mentioned that name, I think, did you not?"

"May be it slipped from me, sir. Well, as I was saying, they thought she was drown'ded there, an' they wor for having a sheef o' reed, with her name tied upon it, put out upon the sthrame, for they say, when a person dies by water, the sheef o' reed will float against the sthrame, or with the sthrame, until it stops over the place where the body lies, if it had to go up O'Sullivan's Cascade itself. But Father Edward O'Connor desired 'em to go home about their business, that the sheaf would go with the current, an' no way else, if they were at it from this till Doomsday. To be sure he knew best."

At this moment, the landlady knocked at the door, to inform our collegian that Mrs. Cregan was expecting him without. Havin

concluded his toilet, he hurried out of the room, not displeased at his release from the observation of this stranger, at a moment when he felt his agitation encreasing to an extent that was almost ungovernable.

END OF VOL. II.

